



# HARVARD JOURNAL OF HISPANIC POLICY

Volume 11 • 1998-1999

## Feature Articles

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## A Decade in Review

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Special Foreword by:

*Arturo Vargas*, Executive Director, NALEO  
(National Association of Latino Elected  
Officials)

Hispanic Education, Leadership and Public Policy

*Louis Freedberg, Ph.D*  
~ Volume 3, 1988–1989

Hispanic Poverty, Is It an Immigrant Problem?

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Discovering Latina Women in Boston Politics

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The Implementation of Public Policies in  
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~ Volume 8, 1994–1995

Family Employment Status and Labor Market  
Outcomes for Teens and Young Adults

*Janis Barry Figueroa, Ph.D*  
~ Volume 9, 1995–1996

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## *Editor's Remarks*

Since Volume I of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (Journal)* was published in 1985, our mission has been to educate, stimulate discussion and provide leadership around pivotal public policy issues that affect the U.S. Latino community. The relevance and importance of such issues continues to persist and expand in a time of major demographic transition, as Latinos will be the largest U.S. minority group by the year 2005.

Progress, however, relies on our ability to utilize the Latino community's presence for creating positive change. Our success in this depends on how carefully we think and reflect about the challenges facing our community prior to taking action. The present and former staffs of the *Journal* have always felt that this publication provides a forum where researchers and academics who have studied different Latino policy debates can share their findings and bring new understanding to Latinos and their policymakers. We applaud our contributing authors for their valuable work and insight. Without you, the *Journal* would not exist.

The 1998–99 issue of the *Journal*, Volume XI: A Decade in Review, brings together some of the major issues addressed over the last ten years. Our intent was to provide a snapshot of the diversity of issues that affected us over the past decade, to remind ourselves of how far we have come and of how much is still ahead of us. Working on this special review edition and probing through numerous old files also brought the *Journal* staff to conduct some introspection of its own. Our review of past articles revealed our lack of coverage of Latino health policy issues and led the Board of Editors to decide that the next issue, Volume XII, will focus solely on health policy and the Latino community.

However, this year did not only reveal the *Journal's* content needs, but also those concerning structure. The Board of Editors realized exactly what had existed before we arrived and how we needed to build on that to best fulfill the *Journal's* mission. Quirina Orozco, Public Relations Editor, made a concerted effort to focus on more first-year student participation, so as to increase the institutional knowledge that remained at the Kennedy School as half of us graduate each June. Realizing there were many potential readers who did not know of the *Journal*, our Fundraising/Subscription Editor, Beatrice Hidalgo, embarked on a campaign this summer to expand our subscription base. Karina Moreno, Board Relations Editor, worked all year to strengthen our relations with the Executive and Editorial Boards culminating in a General Boards Meeting in May 1999 that was instrumental in designing this year's plan.

In trying to find ways to be more sustainable, we must also remember to acknowledge those forces that have supported our development from the beginning. The editors would like to thank the faculty and staff of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, most notably Dean Joseph Nye, Dean Joseph McCarthy, and Professor Richard Parker, for their continuous, unrelenting support of this publication and all our other efforts.

We would like to thank Arturo Vargas for bestowing us with the honor of writing the reflective introduction to this very special edition of the *Journal*. It is only fitting that we chose Mr. Vargas since he has been at the forefront of advancing Latino causes throughout this decade. Arturo Vargas is the Executive Director for the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) and the NALEO Educational Fund. Over the years, his efforts to mobilize and empower Latinos through civic participation and leadership have resulted in great advances for Latinos nationwide.

We would like to express our gratitude to both the Editorial and Executive Advisory Boards of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*. Without their efforts and willingness to take time out of their busy schedules to provide solid advice, resources, and priceless institutional memory, the *Journal's* progress would be limited at best.

Finally, we would also like to thank all of the student staff members who made the publication of Volume XI possible. The students who work on the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* sacrifice their very limited time and energy to bring the *Journal* to fruition because of a deep commitment to Latino issues and to the empowerment of Latino people.

Adelante!

Eraina Ortega  
MPP '99

Nereyda Salinas  
MPP '00

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## *A Decade in Review*

### **Foreword by Arturo Vargas, Executive Director National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials**

*Arturo Vargas is the Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), a national membership organization, and the NALEO Educational Fund, a national nonprofit civic participation and civic research organization.*

*Prior to joining NALEO, Arturo Vargas was the Vice President for Community Education and Public Policy of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). His prior positions at MALDEF included Director of Outreach and Policy where his responsibilities covered the coordination of the organization's 1991 redistricting efforts, which led to a historic increase in the number of Latinos serving in the California legislature. Before that, Arturo directed MALDEF's National 1990 Census Program, an outreach program to promote a full count of the Latino population. This program was recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau as the most effective outreach effort in the 1990 Census.*

*Before joining MALDEF, Arturo was the senior education policy analyst at the National Council of La Raza in Washington, D.C.*

*He presently serves on the boards of the Edward W. Hazen Foundation, the Independent Sector, the National Civic League, the National Immigration Forum, and Hispanics in Philanthropy. In January 1999, Arturo was elected to a second term as chair of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, an umbrella coalition of the leading national Latino organizations.*

*Arturo holds a master's degree in education and a bachelor's degree in history and Spanish from Stanford University. He is from Los Angeles, and was born in El Paso, Texas.*

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It is a very special honor to write the foreword for this retrospective issue of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*. Since its inception, the *Journal* has been an effective vehicle for the dissemination of important papers on Latino policy issues. This particular volume of the *Journal* looks back at the past ten years, pulling several articles that were highlights of key policy concerns for the

Latino community in the 1990s. Each article interestingly provides an important backdrop on defining issues for Latinos in this past decade.

Perhaps the most obvious achievement of the Latino community since this decade began was the explosive growth in political power. Today, Latinos enjoy unparalleled electoral and political influence that is the product of years of organizing, naturalization and voter registration drives and get-out-the vote efforts. Dr. Carol Hardy-Fanta's article "Discovering Latina Women in Boston Politics" (Volume 7) explores the role of Latinas in Boston politics, eloquently arguing that Latinas have been involved in *and* influencing the political world in that city for years. Dr. Hardy-Fanta's paper also helps to place in perspective one of the community's important political achievements this past decade, the emergence of Latinas in major elected offices and leadership roles.

Today, five of the 18 Latinos in Congress are women and for the first time, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus is headed by a woman, U.S. Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA). She is joined in Congress by fellow California Democrats Grace Napolitano and Loretta Sanchez, and U.S. Rep. Nydia Velasquez (D-NY) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the first Latina to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. Another notable milestone of the decade is the emergence of Latinas in state legislatures across the country. In California, 10 of the 24 Latinos in the State Legislature are women, including four of the seven State Senators and six of the seventeen Assembly members. The 1990s also saw the election of the first Latinas to the State Houses in Illinois, Sonia Silva; Massachusetts, Cheryl Rivera; and Michigan, Belda Garza. Among state executives, only New Mexico can herald Latinas in statewide elected office, including Patricia Madrid, Attorney General, and Rebecca Vigil-Giron who succeeded Stephanie Gonzalez as Secretary of State.

There have been similar successes at the local level. A notable example is the election of Gloria Molina (who was profiled in a previous Journal issue), to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors following a victorious MALDEF/ACLU/U.S. Department of Justice lawsuit in *Garza v. Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors*, where the named plaintiff was a woman, Yolanda Garza. Also this decade, Miriam Santos was elected twice as Treasurer of the City of Chicago.

Perhaps the most important election in these past ten years was the 1996 narrow victory of Loretta Sanchez over U.S. Rep. Robert Dornan (R-CA) in Orange County, California. Representative Sanchez's victory demonstrated the growing electoral strength of Latinos in this region of Southern California, and the importance of coalition building as well. Representative Sanchez successfully reached out to moderates, Asians, gays and lesbians, women, and Latinos, to unseat an incumbent who many regarded as representing extremist views. Her election, however, was challenged in the Congress and the integrity and legitimacy of Latino voters were at the heart of several investigations. The challenge to Representative Sanchez's election ultimately was dismissed by Congress, but only after nearly two years of investigations and millions of dollars of public expense. Two years later, Representative Sanchez easily defeated Mr.

Dornan in her first re-election bid. Today, she is co-chair of the Democratic National Committee in part because of her fund raising prowess.

Of course, Latino men achieved many other gains during the past decade as well, most notably marked by the emergence of statewide Latino office holders. In 1998, Cruz Bustamante became California's first Latino statewide elected official since 1871, when he was elected Lieutenant Governor. Other notable achievements include the elections of Ken Salazar, Colorado Attorney General; Dan Morales, Texas Attorney General; and Tony Garza, Texas Railroad Commission.

Despite these many advances, there remain milestones yet to reach. The United States Senate has not had a Latino serve in that chamber in nearly three decades, and no Latino serves as chief executive of any state.

A key reason why the election of Latinos is so important to the future of this country, is the priority they assign to education, as Louis Freedberg points out in his 1989 article "Hispanic Education, Leadership and Public Policy" (Volume 3). In this paper, Mr. Freedberg describes the efforts by Latino elected officials, Latino superintendents, and Latino organizations to improve the educational outcomes for Latino children. However, a persuasive argument can be made that there have not been satisfactory improvements in Latino educational achievement since this paper was written a decade ago. This is extremely unfortunate, for as Janis Barry Figueroa's article, "Family Employment Status and Labor Market Outcomes for Teens and Young Adults," reveals, with less access to working parents and relatives, Puerto Rican youth depend more heavily on formal institutions such as schools to develop their skills and increase their employability.

The undereducation of Latinos was given a federal platform in the early 1990s when President George Bush established the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. The Initiative was reconstituted by President Bill Clinton during his first term. While long on analysis, this effort consistently has been short on action. In recent years, the Initiative has taken a more activist posture and has focused on the role of parents in the education of their children. The second Clinton Administration also proposed a Hispanic Education Initiative, yet, there have been insufficient measurable improvements in Latino educational outcomes.

Ensuring that all Latino children receive a quality education, have equal access to higher education and are able to realize their full potential will continue to challenge our nation's leadership well into the next decade. Several policy developments originating in California will make this challenge even more formidable. In 1996, California voters approved Proposition 209, which eliminated affirmative action in all public policies, including higher education. Two years later, successful passage of Proposition 227 eliminated bilingual education in California's classrooms. The University of California immediately felt the impact of Proposition 209 when its admissions rates of Latinos and African Americans plummeted. While some gains were achieved in subsequent admissions cycles, the elite University of California campuses in Berkeley and Los Angeles have yet to recover. California's public schools continue to struggle with adequately educating its limited-English proficient children under a

scheme which severely restricts native language use. A number of other states are confronting efforts to eliminate affirmative action and bilingual education as well.

Our nation's commitment to the education of language minority children, as well as its overall appreciation of its immigrant origins, were deeply challenged during this decade when a severe recession helped electrify nativism and xenophobia to an unprecedented pinnacle. Abel Valenzuela's 1991 article "Hispanic Poverty: Is it an Immigrant Problem?" (Volume 5), was a foreboding discussion of the policy debates to come and one of the darkest chapters for Latinos in the United States.

California bore the brunt of the nation's recession in the early 1990s, which was exacerbated by the cuts in defense spending that eliminated thousands of jobs in the state. Inevitably, immigrants became the scapegoat, just as in previous periods of economic downturns. Hostility toward immigrants reached a zenith in 1994 with the ballot Proposition 187, that was authored by a small group of immigration restrictionist extremists, and exploited by Governor Pete Wilson who used immigration as the cornerstone of his reelection strategy. The Governor's television campaign advertisements helped to incite fear and anger among California voters toward immigrants, and Mexicans and other Latinos in particular.

Proposition 187 proposed to deny nearly all public benefits, including public education for children, to anyone *suspected* of being an undocumented immigrant. The measure would have further required all public employees to report anyone *suspected* of being an undocumented immigrant to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the State Attorney General. While Proposition 187 was approved by nearly 60 percent of the voters, it inspired an unprecedented level of activism among Latinos who took to the streets in anger and protest.

The passage of Proposition 187 gave impetus to federal welfare reform legislation, which was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton, which denied basic public benefits to *legal permanent residents*. Never before had this nation made such a distinction among its population between citizens and immigrants who had been lawfully admitted and welcomed into this country. Within three years, however, the President fulfilled his pledge to restore eligibility for most public benefits to legal immigrants, assisted by Congressional Republicans who felt the wrath of Latinos and other language minority communities in the 1996 and 1998 elections.

Many observers believe these developments led to the silver lining of this dark period: the inspired decision by hundreds of thousands of Latino legal permanent residents to seek out U.S. citizenship in record numbers. Certainly other factors contributed to the historic level of naturalization applications in the early 1990s, including the coming of age of nearly two million immigrants who became legal permanent residents through the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and became eligible to apply for naturalization. The origins of this legislation and its impact are detailed thoroughly by Lisa Magaña in "The Implementation of Public Policies in Latino Communities" (Volume 8). Dr.

Magaña's paper elaborates on the strategies used in the late 1980s to reach out to thousands of immigrants who were eligible to legalize their status under IRCA.

By 1994, these legal permanent residents were among the millions of immigrants who decided to adopt the United States as their country and applied for naturalization. By 1994, Mexicans became the largest national origin group of naturalization applicants, a position typically dominated by Chinese and Filipino immigrants. Indeed, an entire new attitude toward naturalization among Latino immigrants emerged during this decade. For many, becoming a U.S. citizen was tantamount to an act of self-defense. Many legal permanent residents saw measures such as Proposition 187 and welfare reform as an attack on them, and the lack of U.S. citizenship left them voiceless to participate in the American democratic process.

Between 1990 and 1996, 876,000 Latinos had naturalized, and their voting behavior has changed the nature of the Latino electorate. Analyses of voting data from the 1996 national elections reveal that naturalized Latino citizens were more likely to register to vote and vote than their native-born counterparts. In cities with large Latino immigrant populations, most notably Los Angeles, New York and Miami, naturalized Latino citizens are making a measurable impact on the overall Latino vote. The biggest challenges for the community in the coming decade will be to ensure that this new energized segment of the Latino electorate continues to participate in the electoral process, and to motivate native-born Latinos to increase their participation in elections.

As the 2000 national elections draw closer, the growing importance of the Latino vote and the Latino population in general is beginning to change the nature of American politics. The leading Democratic and Republican presidential candidates have made outreach to Latinos a key element of their campaign strategies. Latinos will have a genuine opportunity in November 2000 to shape the national elections and help decide the next resident of the White House. History and experience has taught us, however, that Latino elected officials, community leaders and activists, and organizations must work together to make this happen. Academic examinations of our successes and shortcomings also play a critical role in assessing our strengths and weaknesses and helping to refine future strategies.

In this sense, the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* has played an integral role in the development of the Latino community. This retrospective volume demonstrates the progress that we have achieved, and challenges us to push farther ahead. Perhaps the most important impact of the *Journal*, however, has been the contributions to the Latino community by the Harvard students who have served on its Board of Editors over the years.

As I reviewed the volumes of previous Journals, I was struck by the names of the members of Board of Editors who have gone on to become important leaders in the Latino community across the country. This retrospective volume of the *Harvard Journal on Hispanic Policy* is more than a commemoration of ten years of policy analysis development. It is a celebration of the talented Latino leadership that has emerged and continues to grow.





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## *Hispanic Education, Leadership and Public Policy*

**Louis Freedberg**

*Louis Freedberg, Ph.D., an anthropologist who studied at Yale University and the University of California at Berkeley, has written extensively on education cross-culturally. When he wrote this article, he was a correspondent at Pacific News Service, a national news service based in San Francisco with a strong interest in minority youth. He was a Knight Fellow at Stanford University where he looked at race relations within both minority and majority youth cultures. He subsequently became Washington correspondent for the San Francisco Chronicle covering immigration, race relations and education. He is currently an Alicia Patterson Fellow based at the Urban Institute in Washington D.C. and is examining the unintended consequences of immigration "reforms" in the U.S. over the past several decades. He can be reached at freedbergl@nationalpress.com.*

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### **I. Education as a Unifying Issue**

Education is an issue that seems to unite Hispanics across America, irrespective of background—a unanimity which has profound implications not only for the future of Hispanic children but for the extent to which Hispanics will be integrated into the political process. A 1987 National Education Association study concluded, “education is a key concern of a broad cross-section of the Hispanic community—from parents to politicians and in between. The issues transcend interest in just bilingual education. Underlying that sentiment is the view that public schools undoubtedly require restructuring to meet the needs of today’s Hispanic American student.”<sup>1</sup> In a survey of 796 Hispanic elected officials conducted by the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO), access to higher education and high school dropouts were rated as the two most important issues facing Hispanics. “Clearly the issue of education is of transcending importance to Hispanic elected officials” the NALEO report concluded.<sup>2</sup>

A quick glance at the educational status of Hispanics makes it clear why education is such a paramount issue in Hispanic communities. There is no disguising the fact that the educational system is failing to serve large numbers of Hispanics. “In general, the data show that approximately 50 percent of Mexican

American and Puerto Rican youth leave high school without a diploma," is the understated observation of a report by the National Council of La Raza (NCLR).<sup>3</sup> Nationally, Hispanic students do marginally better than Blacks on test scores, but they drop out in greater numbers and at earlier ages. They are much less likely to earn A's in school, and almost twice as likely to have earned D's and F's than White students.<sup>4</sup> The end result is that in 1987, 11.7 percent of Hispanics over the age of 25 had not completed elementary school as compared with only 1.8 percent of the total population.<sup>5</sup> Forty percent of Hispanics had not gone beyond the eighth grade as compared with 18 percent of all Americans. Although Cuban Americans are doing better than other Hispanic groups, they still lag behind non-Hispanics. Sixty-one percent of Cuban Americans completed four or more years of high school as compared with 77 percent of non-Hispanics.<sup>6</sup>

Nor have Hispanic enrollments at the post-secondary level kept pace with increases in Hispanic population. According to U.S. Department of Education figures, the numbers of 18 to 24-year old Hispanics in the 18 to 24-year old age group overall increased by 62 percent from 1976 to 1986, while the number of Hispanics in that age group who enrolled in college increased by only 43 percent, from 309,000 to 433,000. Additionally, 43 percent of those students enrolled in college are enrolled in community colleges rather than four-year institutions that lead to graduate study.<sup>7</sup> One bright note is that, after a two-year decline, the percentage of Hispanic high school graduates going to college increased by a small percentage—from 26.9 percent in 1985 to 29 percent in 1986—for a total Hispanic enrollment of 624,000 in institutions of higher education.<sup>8</sup> NCLR concludes, however, that there is a "critical and continuing Hispanic under-representation in post-secondary education."<sup>9</sup>

If education is indeed a unifying issue within Hispanic communities, to what extent have Hispanics become involved in the schools? If they have not become involved, what have been the barriers to this involvement? Has attention to education moved beyond mere lip service to actual involvement on the part of community leaders, parents and organizations? Is there identifiable educational leadership emerging, paralleling an emerging political leadership? Are strategies emerging to cope with some of the most vexing issues in Hispanic education?

Answers to these questions have considerable implications for the extent to which Hispanics will themselves be able to shape public policy affecting Hispanics. If Hispanics continue to drop out and underperform in large numbers, the numbers of Hispanics entering higher education will continue to be lower than their representation in the general population. Thus, while education itself presents some significant public policy challenges, the extent to which the educational system can be made to work for Hispanics will, itself, have a considerable impact on the extent to which Hispanics will be able to shape public policy in a wide range of other areas.

There is also a widespread feeling among Hispanic elected officials and activists that unless major gains are made in Hispanic educational advancement, Hispanics will remain a weak force in American politics.<sup>10</sup> Thus, there can be

few more important challenges in the panoply of issues on Hispanic agendas locally and nationally.

## II. Hispanic Leadership in the Schools

In light of the crisis in Hispanic education and the shared perception—among Hispanics—that it is a problem that must be tackled, it is no accident that the place where Hispanics have made the greatest inroads into the political arena has been in local boards of education. Out of 3,306 Hispanic elected officials in 1987, 1,199 were school board officials, making up the largest category of elected officials.<sup>11</sup> “We do 200 campaigns a year, and a surprising percentage of those are around school boards,” said the late Willie Velasquez, former director of the Southwest Voter Registration Project. “The question of education is a major reason why people get involved in politics in the first place.”<sup>12</sup> Yet Hispanics are as underrepresented on school boards as in other political arenas. Ninety-eight percent of Hispanic school board members are from only eight states, and 47 percent of these are from Texas. Out of 1,199 school board members, only 24 have been elected in 42 states.<sup>13</sup> Even in Texas, where Hispanics make up 25.5 percent of the general population, they comprise only 8.1 percent of school board members. In California, the disparity is even greater: only 6.6 percent of school board members are Hispanic, compared with their 23 percent share of the overall state population.<sup>14</sup>

There are other disturbing features of Hispanic school board representation. In Texas, the percentage of Hispanic school board members only comes close to matching the percentage of Hispanic students in those districts where Hispanics make up 90 to 100 percent of the student enrollment. In school districts with fewer Hispanic students, Hispanic school board members are likely to be underrepresented in proportion to Hispanic student enrollment. For example, in school districts with a 40 to 50 percent Hispanic enrollment, less than 20 percent of school board members are Hispanic.<sup>15</sup>

An equally serious problem is that Hispanics are severely underrepresented in teaching and administrative positions in the schools. A 1980 survey indicated that Hispanics comprised only 3.5 percent of “full-time employees” in elementary and secondary schools nationally. They made up 2.6 percent of all elementary school teachers and 1.7 percent of secondary school teachers. Two percent of principals were Hispanic. In Los Angeles, the school district with the largest concentration of Hispanic students, Hispanic students comprise 56.9 percent of the student body, but only 10.2 percent of the full-time teaching staff. On the other hand, Hispanics have fared better in non-instructional and non-certified positions. Nationally they comprise 7.9 percent of teacher’s aides, 5.9 percent of service workers, and 4.4 percent of clerks and secretaries.<sup>16</sup>

As a result of affirmative action and the expansion of bilingual programs, the percentage of Hispanic teaching and administrative staff has increased since 1980; but Hispanic educators are still not close to achieving parity with their numbers in the general population. There are some positive signs of progress, however. The numbers of school board members have almost doubled since

1970, and Hispanics have assumed school superintendencies and other high-level leadership positions in some of the nation's key school districts. Additionally, Hispanic organizations, on both a local and national level, have become increasingly involved in the public schools.

### **III. An Emerging Educational Leadership: Hispanic School Superintendents**

Although still a small group, the number of Hispanic school superintendents has gradually increased over the past decade. The following are Hispanic superintendents of medium to large-sized school districts (above 15,000): Hernan LaFontaine in Hartford, Connecticut; Joe Fernandez in Dade County, Florida; James Vasquez in Edgewood Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas; Victor Rodriguez in the San Antonio Unified School District in San Antonio, Texas; Lilian Barna in Albuquerque, New Mexico (until June, 1988); George Garcia in Kansas City, Missouri; Joe Coto in Oakland, California; Ramon Cortines in San Francisco, California; and Anthony Trujillo in Sweetwater Unified School District in San Diego, California. In Los Angeles, William Anton is deputy superintendent, with Hispanics in key administrative positions throughout the district. (In Texas, there are approximately 50 Hispanic school superintendents, but almost all are in small independent school districts with almost entirely Hispanic enrollments.)

The emergence of this select group of Hispanic educational leaders raises the question as to whether Hispanic leadership makes a difference in the educational outcomes of Hispanic children. While appointment of Hispanic superintendents is welcomed from a purely affirmative action perspective, the larger issue is whether a Hispanic superintendent brings certain insights and sensitivities that allow him or her to be unusually responsive or effective in meeting the needs of Hispanic students. Such a determination could presumably only be made based on a scientific assessment of educational achievement prior to, during and after a superintendent's tenure. In the absence of such a study—which in any case would be fraught with methodological pitfalls—site visits to several school districts (Hartford, Miami, San Antonio, Albuquerque, Oakland, San Francisco and Los Angeles) were undertaken by the author, in which superintendents were interviewed and programs for Hispanic students were examined.

These site visits strongly suggest that Hispanic superintendents are having a considerable impact on providing direction and shaping new approaches to Hispanic education. Interviews with superintendents reveal that they share common perspectives in several key areas: a firm belief that all children can learn; an insistence that administrators raise expectations and standards for Hispanic children; a recognition of the need to develop customized approaches to dealing with individual differences; and an emphasis that children at lower achievement levels must be paid attention to in the same way that college bound students are. All stress the need for dropout prevention programs. Most superintendents express the view that schools must be held accountable for the system's failure to retain Hispanic students, and that what is needed is more than

educational "reform" but major structural changes in how schools are run.

Hispanic superintendents appear to be making a difference in at least three areas directly affecting Hispanic students: 1) raising sensitivities of their districts to the unique needs of Hispanic students by acting as role models for those students and becoming spokespersons on behalf of Hispanic and minority education in their states, both regionally and nationally; 2) increasing the hiring of Hispanics and other minorities in leadership positions; and 3) providing leadership in the development of both bilingual and dropout programs.

These superintendents provide the core for an emerging educational leadership within Hispanic communities. Once in office, there are usually high expectations for them to have a considerable, if not immediate, impact on Hispanic and minority performance. But there are major barriers to this occurring in the short term. In the first instance, test scores do not change overnight. Moreover, changing school bureaucracies—among the most conservative in our society—can be a slow and tedious process. Says Jose Cardenas of the Intercultural Development Research Corporation in San Antonio and former superintendent of San Antonio's Edgewood Independent School District:

You're very constrained in how much you can do. One of the biggest frustrations of being Superintendent of Schools was that policy decisions and change did not automatically filter down through the hierarchy. And you get assistant superintendents and principals who disagree with you, and teachers who are dysfunctional, and even though you feel you have identified some of the basic problems and you recommend drastic changes in the educational system, there is no guarantee that these changes are going to filter down and that you're going to have drastic changes at the classroom level, in methodology and in the performance of kids.

Because of their central role in the educational arena, the reasons behind why there is not a larger number of Hispanic superintendents warrants some examination. First, Hispanics are underrepresented in teaching and administrative positions, so the pool of candidates has been limited compared to other groups. This, says former New York City Schools Chancellor Anthony Alvarado, is partially a result of long standing historical forces that have kept Hispanics out of the teaching profession. Says Alvarado:

As a community, we have been more mal-educated and have received low levels of education generally. A lot of folks didn't go into education. If you look at New York City 30 or 40 years ago, you found a significant number of Black educators in the system. They were predominantly Southern educated, who migrated North, took the civil service exams, and got placed. But there wasn't any corresponding Hispanic equivalent.

"Simply put," says Lilian Barna, Schools Superintendent in Albuquerque, "If the pool of teachers and lower level administrators isn't large enough, then you don't produce as many candidates for the superintendencies that are available."

The small number of Hispanic superintendents has also been tied to the relatively low levels of Hispanic political empowerment, especially where Hispanics constitute a small percentage of the voting population. School superintendencies have become highly politicized in recent years, so that appointments to this office reflect overall political realities in a community. In

recent years, the new development has been the competing pressures between Black and Hispanic constituencies to get a favored candidate elected, often resulting in bitter clashes. Recent examples of such competition are in New York City, San Francisco and Denver. In the words of Anthony Alvarado:

The superintendency is a political job that one gets through a political process, and if one's community has less political clout, you'll have less of an opportunity of Hispanics being selected for those positions. Even where you have a large Hispanic population, you have other groups that control the politics of those situations.

Another factor is a rather complex byproduct of affirmative action. When seeking a minority superintendent, there is a tendency to seek the "best" Hispanic or the "best" Black in the country for a position, which further reduces the eligible pool. Similar standards are rarely applied when hiring White superintendents. Says Jose Cardenas:

They have a lot of white Anglos who are certainly not the best Whites in the country. Why does it have to be the best Hispanic in the country to fill that one Hispanic position? The same thing is true in the selection of a superintendent. I feel there is an implementation of a double standard, with demands being made on a Hispanic candidate which far exceeds the demands that have traditionally or are currently being made on white Anglo candidates.

Finally, there is the less quantifiable issue of discrimination in hiring. Most Hispanics are superintendents in school districts where Hispanics constitute a large proportion of the school population, and where there is a community-wide perception that it is "time" to hire a Hispanic superintendent. The fact that Hispanics are not hired to any significant degree in districts where Hispanics are a small minority indicates that ethnicity is still a major obstacle in hiring. However, the recent appointments of Joe Coto in Oakland, where Hispanics comprise only 12 percent of school population, and George Garcia in Kansas City, where the comparable figure is 4 percent, are signs that ethnicity is becoming less of a factor in certain geographic areas, and hopefully are harbingers of more openness in hiring nationally.

In spite of difficulties in getting hired, and in carrying out reforms once in office, Hispanic superintendents have uniformly emerged as major leaders in their communities, and have initiated reforms of benefit to Hispanic and other minority students. It is likely that the number of Hispanic superintendents will increase simply as a result of demographics. Says Miami's Joe Fernandez:

One of the things that is happening is that we're relatively new, it's a matter of time, at some point in time, by mere attrition, by mere numbers, we'll be like the Irish, the Italians, the Germans, like everyone else. Mere numbers are going to make the thing happen, not only in the school superintendency but in all areas.

#### **IV. Hispanic Superintendents: Three Case Studies**

Hispanic superintendents face different challenges, depending on the size of the district, location, and a myriad of other variables. They also differ in the resources at their disposal to implement effective strategies. The following section highlights some of the challenges faced by three Hispanic superintendents.

### *1. Dade County, Florida*

The Dade County school district is the nation's fourth largest, with 236,127 students and an annual budget of \$1.2 billion. It is a massive, expanding enterprise. Each month, 300 to 400 new students enroll in the schools, half the size of an average new elementary school. Hispanics comprise 41.7 percent of the student enrollment, Blacks 33 percent and Whites 24 percent. In July of 1987, 55-year-old Joe Fernandez became the district's first Hispanic superintendent, after serving 27 years as a teacher, principal and administrator in the district. Fernandez, of Puerto Rican descent, born and raised in New York City, has had an impact in two major areas: affirmative action and "professionalization" of the teaching staff.

His key innovation has been to spearhead a "school based management" program which places the locus of control at the school site rather than with central administration. This approach has been called for in several national reports on educational reform, most notably that issued by the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession of the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. Dade County is the first school district to implement it in a major way.

The approach is part of a larger effort to "professionalize" teaching, which Fernandez sees as the key to attracting more minorities, and especially Hispanics, to the teaching profession. Until recently, teaching was one of the few professions readily open to minorities, but as other options have opened up for them, fewer minorities are choosing teaching as a career option—at the very time that minority enrollments in urban school districts are rising by leaps and bounds. In Dade County, only 16 percent of teachers are Hispanic, and most are employed in the district's large bilingual program.

The goal of the school-based management program is not only to attract teachers and improve their performance, but also to have an impact on reducing the dropout rate, which the district estimates is 34 percent for Hispanics, higher than the district's overall dropout rate of 29.5 percent. Says Fernandez, "We're doing the grand experiment in education. We've decided to empower teachers, and we're trying to tie the empowerment to student results. We're basically telling our teachers, 'Dream, the sky is the limit, tell us what you think you have to do to make things better for these children out there.'"

One of the participating schools is Riviera Junior High School, which has 1,700 students. Overcrowded because of the recent Hispanic influx into the county, it has a 78 percent Hispanic enrollment. Last year 13 teachers came up with a proposal to restructure the school, a plan that was approved by virtually all the teachers. Since it was introduced in September 1987, Principal Armando Sanchez's role has changed dramatically. Instead of being able to make decisions unilaterally, control of the school now rests in a newly formed council, which meets monthly. Sanchez is on the council but the majority of its members are teachers' representatives from the school's major academic departments. A secretary, a custodian and a union steward also sit on the council.

One of the council's first actions was to change the teaching day from six hour-long periods to seven 50-minute periods. Teachers argued that 60-minute periods are too long to hold the attention of junior high students. And by adding

an extra class, the school could offer more electives. The schedule change also gave teachers more time outside the classroom. They chose to spend the time—20 minutes a day—in a variety of non-teaching activities labeled “professional duty,” as a way to help teachers feel more involved in the total life of the school. Some teachers counsel students. Spanish-speaking teachers call parents of Hispanic students who are cutting school. Others help monitor the hallways during recess, or assist in the school store. Three teachers were designated “teacher assistants,” and spend half their time outside the classroom.

As part of the plan, all teachers are required to volunteer in one of several committees which oversee aspects of the school environment, such as curriculum, school finances, and student services. The result, says Principal Sanchez, is that “there is better morale, because the teachers feel they have some control over the school’s destiny.”

It is too soon to tell how successful this approach will be in improving school performance, which is why for the moment only 44 out of Miami’s 250 schools are participating in the program while results are monitored. Its outcome is being watched closely by school districts around the country.

On the affirmative action front, Fernandez has developed a Leadership Experience Opportunity (LEO) Program, the goal of which is to bring minorities into top-level positions in the district. Only 11 percent of administrators are Hispanic; 24 percent are Black. The goal of the program is to give minorities experience in top level positions which will allow them to apply for similar jobs in open competition. For example, a minority assistant principal will become principal of a six-week summer program. Minority principals are in turn given internship opportunities in the district’s central office. Fernandez is also moving minority principals into non-minority schools. “Historically we have had Black principals in Black schools, Hispanic principals in predominantly Hispanic schools, and White principals in White schools;” says Fernandez. “I’m shaking that up totally.”

Fernandez is promoting the Partnership in Education (PIE) Program, which is designed to involve all sectors of the community in local schools. The program reflects Fernandez’s view that all constituencies of the community—and not only the school—must take responsibility for education. Says Fernandez,

I can’t just deal with the educational program, knowing that when those kids leave us, they go in substandard housing, or into areas which have a lot of crime, or where there are no human resource services. We have to approach this thing holistically. At Miami High, for example, you are trying to say that rather than just the schools doing it alone, you bring in the parents, you bring in housing, you bring in police. We deal with the kids in school, but beyond that we try to provide some work for them if they need work; we provide child care services, if they need child care, we try to provide eye glass care if they need eyeglasses. You have to look at the whole picture, you can’t look at it piece by piece.

These programs are being introduced against the backdrop of a wide range of dropout prevention programs initiated over the past several years. In one program, 100 potential dropouts are identified at a number of schools, and a rebate of \$50 per student is given to the school for each student who remains in school, and demonstrates improvements on a variety of measures. The Recruitment into an Educational Program through Outreach (REPO) program tries to “reclaim”



dropouts by working with the private sector to provide training and employment when students re-enroll in school. The Student At Risk program provides intensive high-interest instruction to eighth or tenth grade students, along with close supervision and counseling.

While Fernandez says his task is to serve all students, he says his Hispanic background allows him to be especially sensitive to the needs of minority students. "I don't want to imply that someone (Anglo) won't make a difference for minorities, too. But I do think that I have a sensitivity to the problems of Hispanics, being Puerto Rican, being raised on 125th and Amsterdam (in New York City)."

## 2. *San Antonio, Texas*

In the Edgewood Unified School District, on the poverty stricken western edge of San Antonio, Superintendent James Vasquez faces a different kind of problem: lack of an adequate financial base. Until recently, the district was the poorest of Texas's 1063 school districts. Vasquez grew up in nearby neighborhoods and has spent his entire professional life in the district. He has been Edgewood's superintendent for 10 years. Now with the help of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) he is engaged in a David vs. Goliath struggle with the state of Texas over how schools should be financed. Edgewood is the lead plaintiff in challenging the way schools are funded. For Vasquez, that is the key structural obstacle to Hispanic achievement in his district, rather than lack of responsiveness on the part of the district to Hispanic concerns. In the *Edgewood vs. Kirby* case (April 1987), Edgewood won the 1st round when—in a strongly worded decision—judge Harley Clark (250th district court) ruled that under the Texas Constitution the state's system of school financing was unconstitutional. The ruling referred to the huge disparities in expenditures on students, from a low of just over \$2,000 per student in one district to over \$19,000 in another.

The Edgewood schools have a 94 percent Hispanic enrollment. Six out of seven board members are Hispanic, as are close to half of its teachers and principals. Almost all the top administrators are Hispanic. Yet students still perform way below state averages. The poverty in the district is obvious even to a casual observer. Most residents live in tiny woodframe houses with peeling paint. No industry boosts the tax base. As a result, Edgewood has a tax base of \$38,854 in property wealth per student. Eighty-five percent of its 15,000 students qualify for free or subsidized school lunches. Just minutes away, the Alamo Independent School District, also within San Antonio's city limits, has a tax base of \$570,109 in property wealth per student. In spite of these disparities, Edgewood has developed a reputation for innovation. The district introduced a wide range of reforms long before the state mandated similar reforms, such as a "no pass no play" rule in athletic programs, remedial summer school providing students with practice on standardized tests, and requiring four years of English for graduation.

A 1983 state accreditation team concluded that a prospective visitor to the district "would hold no hope of finding any acceptable quality in the instructional programs. In point of fact, the monitoring team found conditions that ranged from good through excellent to exemplary. It can be said with confi-

dence that nowhere in the state is a school district achieving such high degrees of excellence in its operation, given the handicaps under which all concerned are operating.”

In spite of these efforts, Hispanic educators express extreme frustration about their inability to raise test scores. “Students still scrape the bottom on state tests,” says Pete Escamilla, who recently resigned after 10 years on the Edgewood Board of Education. “You get frustrated with the idea that we do so much that is innovative, but come testing time you get hit right between the eyes.”

The answer to Superintendent Vasquez is simple: more money to provide better programs for poor students who have greater needs than wealthy Anglo students. Says Norma Cantu, a MALDEF attorney, “You can have excellent leadership, but if the leadership doesn’t have any of the resources to carry out its educational mission, that district will never reach its full potential.” This is a view shared by Vasquez:

We’re not a minority in the sense that our kids don’t get lost in the cracks because the administration does not give a damn about them. The problem is that we don’t have a tax base to get us into a competitive stance. If I want to get the best science and math teachers, I can’t compete out there. I can’t give them the perks other school districts can give. So I have to take what’s left over for the most part.

### *3. Oakland, California*

Compared to Edgewood, where the entire school system is oriented toward meeting the needs of Hispanic students, Oakland’s Hispanic student population comprises only 12 percent of the student enrollment. There are no Hispanics on the school board in a district where Blacks are the dominant minority. Poverty is also a pervasive factor here. Forty-three percent of students come from families on public assistance. Joe Coto has pushed the notion of raised expectations for minorities, including Hispanics, to the limit. While most educators insist on the need for all students to get a high school diploma, Coto argues that a high school diploma should not be the end goal, but only a first step. All students, Coto argues, must be encouraged to set their sights on going to college. He has set up what he calls a Promise program—the promise being that financial need will not be a barrier for any Hispanic student who wants to go to college. This year, the financially strapped Oakland school board set aside \$500,000 in a trust fund which will be used to pay college costs that students are unable to cover through regular scholarship or financial aid packages. Seventh, eighth and ninth graders sign pledges in which they agree to “complete all courses required for college admission, maintain the minimum grade point average required for college admissions, take all tests required for college admission,” and to participate in district-sponsored college preparation programs. The pledge is also signed by the student’s parents, the superintendent, and the presidents of all the major colleges in the area.

The Promise programs are not restricted to minorities, but that clearly is the target group. It will be an uphill struggle. In the 1986-87 school year, only 17 Hispanics (11 percent of all Hispanics) in the senior class, went on to a four-year college. Among Blacks, the comparable figure was 10 percent. Says Coto:

What we are really trying to do with our Promise program is to affect major institutional change. It's an effort at getting counselors, teachers, parents, the business community, the school board, the superintendent, everyone saying to the students, "a high school education is not enough, the world is changing too dramatically, the only way you are going to survive effectively is by going to college."

In addition to the Promise program, Coto has initiated a High Intensity Program in the elementary grades, in which there is a 1:15 teacher to pupil ratio, targeting students at risk of dropping out. These classes will serve primarily Black students, who make up the majority of students in the district; but Hispanic students will also benefit where appropriate. Coto believes that his Hispanic background has made a difference, but in not easily quantifiable ways. When he visits classrooms, for example, he is able to talk to Hispanic students in Spanish. Coto's task is additionally difficult because there are no Hispanics on the school board, and he is in the position of having to be the major advocate on behalf of Hispanic students, as he explains:

Even though Black and White board members have sensitivity to bilingual education, I bring a stronger sense of what needs to be done for Hispanic children, and a stronger sensitivity to the needs of Hispanic children. The stronger I get, the greater visibility I get, the more I talk to students, to parents—it all has to help. It translates to other ethnic groups too. Other Hispanics are going to say, "Yeah right on, mira, el señor Coto, he says you can go to college." They are going to believe me more strongly than if it was someone else who, they could not visibly see, is from the same roots.

## V. Role of Hispanic School Board Members

Coto's task of advocating for Hispanics without Hispanic representation on his school board underscores the importance of Hispanic school board membership in the overall equation of educational leadership. Clearly the role of the Hispanic school board member is a key element. But several questions arise: How effective can an Hispanic school board member be in the absence of an Hispanic superintendent, or, at the very least, if Hispanics are not represented significantly in high-level administrative positions? How effective can a lone Hispanic school board member be on a board dominated by Anglos or by other ethnic groups? Is an Hispanic board member more constrained when he or she is elected citywide and must represent a wide range of constituencies, than if he or she is elected from a predominantly Hispanic district?

None of these questions have been examined in any detail and answers to them must be based on the experience of school board members in specific districts. What is clear is that even in the absence of a Hispanic superintendent or other high-level Hispanic leadership, it is critically important to have Hispanic board members who can act as advocates on behalf of programs benefiting Hispanics. Unavoidably, several issues of key importance to Hispanic school board officials, such as bilingual education, affirmative action, and minority set-asides in construction projects and contracts, will come up for deliberation and will prove politically controversial; but strong political representation will facilitate easier passage of initiatives in these areas, and make it easier for the superintendent to implement them. School board members can also provide the impe-

tus for hiring a Hispanic superintendent.

In Hartford, for example, Maria Sanchez is the only Hispanic member of the Hartford Board of Education. On the board for 15 years, she played a key role in the selection and appointment of Hernan LaFontaine as Hartford's first Hispanic superintendent and the first Puerto Rican superintendent in the United States. Sanchez, who is sometimes dubbed the "godmother" of Puerto Rican politics in Hartford, has a strong base in Hartford's Hispanic community from the newsstand she has run for almost twenty years, just two blocks from the district's administration building.

In Miami, two out of seven school board members are Hispanic. Paul Cejas was the leading vote-getter when he was first elected to the board in 1980 with 247,000 votes. Rosa Castro-Feinberg was appointed by former Governor Bob Graham in 1986, becoming the first woman Hispanic on the board. For his part, Cejas has played a key role in promoting affirmative action and minority contracts, as well as becoming a major spokesperson on behalf of dropouts. The recent appointment of Superintendent Fernandez points to the effectiveness of having a strong Hispanic superintendent working closely with outspoken Hispanic representatives on the school board. Says Fernandez, "If you don't have a board member who makes affirmative action a main goal for the board, and pushes on a policy level, the board is not going to move in that area." Cejas says that until Fernandez was appointed "there was basically white Anglo-Saxon male dominance at all ranks." As for the previous Anglo superintendent, Cejas says, "he talked a big show, but where we had our major disagreements was in minority contracts and in affirmative action. He said he was sensitive (to Hispanics) but he didn't do enough."

In San Antonio's Edgewood School District, six out of seven school board members are Hispanic, and their experiences dramatize what can be done with majority representation on the board. In 1976, a political action committee called Committee for an Alternative and Relevant Education (CARE) was put forward to run candidates, and eventually its candidates took control of the board. Mostly in their twenties and early thirties, the board [members] have made the school board a central player in evolving strategies for Hispanic children who make up the majority of the school district. Here they do not feel pressured to automatically rubber stamp proposals put forward by their Superintendent Vasquez, and Hispanic representation on the board is not an issue. Board members have staked out an independent position, and some question whether Vasquez's argument that unequal school financing is the key to Hispanic success or failure. All share the view that setting high standards for Hispanics is an essential element in ensuring educational progress. One senses that a healthy and vigorous debate is going on in Edgewood about what will really make a difference for Hispanic students, a debate free of the political constraints imposed by the lack of adequate Hispanic representation on those boards.

The impact of underrepresentation of Hispanics was dramatically illustrated recently in Los Angeles where only one Hispanic, Leticia Quezada, sits on the seven-member school board. Deputy Superintendent, William Anton, a His-

panic who enrolled in predominantly Hispanic eastside schools in the first grade, and had risen through the ranks over a 37 year career in the schools, was a leading candidate for the superintendent's post. The last time the school board had hired an outsider for the superintendent's post was in 1948. But in spite of tremendous support for Anton from Hispanic parent groups and organizations, the board hired Leonard Britton, the Anglo superintendent in Miami. Its decision was widely regarded as an affront to the Hispanic community.

Ironically, those school districts which have high Hispanic representation on their boards are likely to be in areas where Hispanics are heavily concentrated, and are therefore likely to be poor districts. Even though Hispanic board members may be adequately represented and committed to implementing effective programs, the resources will probably not be available. Conversely, in higher wealth school districts, which tend to have higher Anglo enrollments, there are likely to be fewer, if any, Hispanics on the school board. Thus, a lone Hispanic school board member may not have the political clout to spearhead significant programs or reforms, even though the resources may be available to do so. Yet if he or she can strike the right kinds of allegiances, he or she might be able to convince non-Hispanic board members to free up the necessary resources to target Hispanic students.

The challenge is not only to increase resources in poor heavily Hispanic districts but to increase representation on school boards in areas where Hispanics are not in the majority. Says Jose Cardenas, "When a school district is 97 percent Hispanic, then it is no great political accomplishment to elect a Hispanic board member. In fact, you have to turn over rocks to find someone who wasn't Hispanic to run for the school board

But increasing Hispanic representation is tied to the larger problem of the large numbers of Hispanics who are not eligible to vote because they are not citizens. According to the U.S. Census, 52 percent of Hispanics who did not vote, did not do so because they were not citizens, compared to eight percent of Anglos and eight percent of Blacks. This is a particularly acute problem among the large numbers of parents who have children in elementary grades, a population which is likely to contain a high proportion of recent immigrants, and also to have a direct interest in the schools. They are effectively disenfranchised from political representation on school boards.

In spite of the obstacles, obvious opportunities exist. Running for school board seats usually requires less money than other political offices. A parent is helped by the fact that simply being a parent is a qualification for running. Thus, the opportunities for Hispanic parents to run for school boards are significant and virtually untapped, especially in the forty or more states that have almost no Hispanic representation in this arena.

## **VI. Involvement of Hispanic Organizations**

A key to the furthering of a Hispanic educational agenda is the involvement of Hispanic organizations in the schools. In general, there has been a high degree of involvement of these organizations, both at a local and national level, reflect-

ing the high level of concern about education in Hispanic communities. This has occurred in spite of an inherent tendency by schools to resist intervention from outside organizations. Says Jose Cardenas, "Education has been a closed enterprise which has never encouraged participation by Blacks or Whites or anybody, in that there had not been an extensive amount of any types of community involvement in the schools." Nonetheless, Cardenas says, "Hispanic organizations have placed a very high value on education, and up to the present time, they have been one of the instigators for reform."

Nationally, few organizations have been as instrumental in the reform process as MALDEF. This organization has played a major role in filing lawsuits on behalf of bilingual education programs and in challenging discriminatory admissions practices and school financing systems. Its major educational target is now in Texas, where it is representing the Edgewood school district and some 60 others in the landmark *Edgewood vs. Kirby* case referred to previously. In addition, MALDEF, along with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and G.I. Forum, are the lead plaintiffs in a suit filed in December, 1987 that alleges that the state has failed to adequately recruit and admit Hispanics to public universities, and to offer programs, especially at graduate and professional schools, in areas where Hispanics are concentrated. The suit is attempting to address the fact that while Hispanics make up 24 percent of high school graduates, only 12 percent of college freshman at traditionally White colleges are Hispanic.<sup>17</sup>

Other national efforts include the Southwest Voter Registration Project's challenges to district-wide school board elections, and participation in school board elections in the Southwest. LULAC has developed a High School Dropout Prevention Program, and is compiling a compendium of model high school dropout programs which were issued in 1988.

But the most comprehensive educational involvement of any national Hispanic organization is the Innovative Education Project of the Washington, D.C. based NCLR. The project has developed five innovative community-based approaches for improving the educational status of Hispanics, and they are being implemented in several communities, including Kansas City, Rochester, Houston and Chicago. A key aspect is that the programs are run by community-based organizations outside the public schools. What is impressive about the project is that it is based on a carefully thought out and remarkably detailed strategy for tackling key points in the educational system where Hispanics are most vulnerable. It involves parents, teachers, students and educators, and provides a blueprint for community-based efforts for Hispanic education nationwide.<sup>18</sup>

The project consists of five programs: *Academias del Pueblo*; Project Success; Project Second Chance; Parents as Partners; and a Teachers Support Network. The *Academia Del Pueblo*, run by the Guadalupe Center in Kansas City, is a community based after-school and summer program to help elementary school children meet or exceed grade promotion requirements. It is intended to cope with the 10 percent of Hispanic children aged 8 to 13, and the 25 percent of those aged 14 to 20 who are more than two years below grade level.<sup>19</sup> The program concentrates on strengthening English language skills, but also

includes a Spanish language component. The program is designed to create a "three-way partnership" between the *Academia*, parents and the local schools. Parents are integrally involved by signing a cooperative learning plan in which they agree to: 1) establish household rules about homework, 2) review homework daily, 3) read to the child for a certain number of minutes per week, and 4) attend parent training seminars or meetings.

Project Success, currently being implemented by the Rochester public schools and in Chicago by the non-profit *El Hogar Del Niño*, is an after-school and summer program for at-risk junior high school students. It begins by targeting 4th and 5th graders. Students are assigned counselors who work with students and parents, as well as their regular teachers, and counselors to assist them in identifying weaknesses and developing short and long-range academic plans. The focus is not only on remedial assistance in one or more subject areas, but also on helping students "learn how to learn."

Project Second Chance, recently begun in Houston by the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, is designed to provide Hispanic dropouts with a "second chance" to resume their education. It provides students with counseling in the academic and English language skills they will need to get a General Educational Development (GED) certificate or a high school diploma in a traditional or alternative setting. It also provides for internship opportunities to help students make informed decisions about their careers.

Parents as Partners, currently operating in Kansas City, is designed to actively involve parents in the education of their children by providing them with information about the schools and about "improved skills in effective parenting."<sup>20</sup> Projects are staffed by a bilingual program coordinator. A Community Advisory Committee engages in a wide range of activities, including organizing a parent community "volunteer bank" as a resource for classroom teachers and providing assistance in translating material or information into Spanish. The purpose of the Teacher Support Network, now underway in Chicago, is to increase the effectiveness of public school teachers working with Hispanic children, including non-Hispanic monolingual teachers and Hispanic and bilingual teachers.

In addition to programs and initiatives sponsored by national organizations, there are a plethora of local efforts that go largely unreported. In San Antonio, for example, Hispanic journalists sponsor writing contests for aspiring student journalists. The San Antonio Area Association for Minorities in Engineering tries to interest students in taking advanced math courses, and the Hispanic Lawyers Association is providing scholarship and guidance for students wanting to go to law school. In Hartford, members of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce visit schools to encourage students to stay in school, and have launched an advertising campaign with that goal. In Albuquerque, the *Los Padillos* Community Organization provides scholarships to students in one of the poorest areas in the city's heavily Hispanic southside. The G.I. Forum and LULAC have also donated substantial amounts of money for local scholarships. In Miami, the Cuban American National Council (CANC) runs the Little Miami Institute—a private school for potential dropouts—on the second floor of a small shopping

center in the heart of Miami's Little Havana district. The school serves students from a variety of Hispanic backgrounds, including Cubans and Nicaraguans. In San Francisco, the Real Alternative Program (RAP), a 20-year-old non-profit Latino organization, runs *La Escuela*, an alternative school for 50 "at-risk" students operated out of four portable bungalows in the city's Mission District.

All these efforts do not conform to the stereotype that Hispanics are not involved in the schools. Instead, they point to a new partnership between schools, parents and Hispanic organizations locally and nationally—a partnership that may be a key element in advancing the educational fortunes of Hispanic children.

## VII. The Future: Policy Implications

The preceding discussion points in several important policy directions. Just as there have been concerted attempts to develop an Hispanic political leadership, such as MALDEF's leadership program, a coordinated campaign to develop an educational leadership needs to be undertaken as well. Unless major advances can be made on the educational front, political gains will also be limited. What is clear is that any serious effort to tackle the crisis in Hispanic education must take a four-pronged approach:

1. Hispanic leadership should be expanded at all levels of education, from superintendencies to top- and middle-level administrators and teaching staff;
2. Hispanic school board membership needs to be increased as a way to ensure that attention is focused on the particular needs of Hispanic students, and to provide Hispanic educators with the necessary political support to implement programs benefiting Hispanic students;
3. Hispanic organizations and parent groups need to become extensively involved in the educational process, and be encouraged to establish educational programs in the schools as well as in the community; and
4. The obvious inequities in school financing between high wealth districts and low wealth districts where Hispanics are heavily concentrated need to be eliminated.

Each of these elements will require far-reaching strategies to ensure their success. In order to develop Hispanic educational leadership at the highest levels, the number of Hispanic teachers will have to be increased beyond their current levels. This will require aggressive recruiting efforts to increase teacher salaries and to "professionalize" the teaching profession, along the lines of the Miami "school based management" program. To increase school board representations, a concerted effort will have to be made to encourage local activists and parents to run for school boards in greater numbers. Where necessary, at-large elections will have to be challenged and replaced with single-district elections along the lines of numerous such efforts by the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project. Special efforts will have to be made outside California and the Southwest, where only a handful of Hispanics have been elected to school boards. Regarding involvement of Hispanic organizations and



parent groups, program initiatives currently being sponsored by those organizations and local groups need to be studied to assess their effectiveness, and expanded to other school districts. This will require the development of a vigorous partnership between school districts which are providing leadership in Hispanic education, Hispanic elected officials, and educational advocacy organizations. Finally, to reduce funding inequities, legislation will have to be enacted in those states that have to assume a major responsibility in this effort. Where legislation cannot be passed, lawsuits along the lines of *Edgewood vs. Kirby* in Texas will have to be filed.

Efforts like these will help clarify a major theoretical question as to what interventions are likely to have the most impact on educational achievement. Will changing the structure of the classroom be sufficient? Will it require changing teaching styles? How important is the role of the principal? To what extent does the home environment shape educational performance? What influence does racial and ethnic discrimination have in the educational equation?

While leading Hispanic educators mostly insist that all these aspects have an impact on educational outcomes, they have a consistent belief that the most important determinant is what happens within the school environment itself, and that schools must take responsibility for the success or failure of Hispanic children. Within the schools, they say that raising expectations for Hispanic students will have the greatest impact, as graphically demonstrated by Jaime Escalante, the math instructor at Garfield High School in Los Angeles who was featured in the movie *Stand and Deliver*.

On the surface, "raising expectations" sounds relatively straightforward. Yet, it will be a challenge. Teachers and counselors, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic, will have to be sensitized to the needs of Hispanic children. Support programs will have to be installed to ensure that students do not fall through the cracks.

This is a major public policy challenge that cannot be left to educators alone. Hispanics have an important role to play in sensitizing the larger society as to the particular needs of Hispanic students and as to how they are similar or different from other minority students. But the educational success or failure of Hispanic children has profound implications for the futures of Hispanics in the United States, and, in that sense, it is a society-wide responsibility that extends far beyond just the schools, and beyond the Hispanic community itself.

### Endnotes

1. . . . *Justice For All*, The National Education Association Executive Committee Study Group Reports on Ethnic Minority Concerns, Washington, D.C., 1987.
2. *National Roster of Hispanic Elected Officials*, 1987, National Association of Latino Elected Officials, Washington, D.C.
5. *Hispanics in the Work Force: Hispanic Youth*, Part 11, National Council of La Raza, Washington, D.C., 1986.
6. *Education Network News*, vol. 6, no. 6, pp. 2 and 3, National Council of La Raza, Sept. 1987.

9. Orum, op cit, page 37. These statistics have a particular meaning for Hispanics, because Hispanics have a higher percentage of children than any other major population group. As of 1987, 24.9 percent of Hispanics are between 5 and 17 (compared to 18.4 percent of the total population). One in ten Hispanics is under the age of five. The impact of this young population is already being felt in large urban school districts where Hispanics are disproportionately represented in kindergarten and elementary grades, most notably in Los Angeles where Hispanics make up 63.5 percent of the kindergarten enrollment (*Education Network News*, op cit., p. 2).
10. It is well known that voting turnout is positively correlated with education levels. This may help explain low turnout of Hispanics at the polls. In the last Presidential election, only 48 percent of eligible Hispanics were registered to vote because they were non-citizens—significantly lower than the national rate (Pachon, Harry *Recurring Issues in Hispanic Politics*, Washington D.C. NALEO Educational Fund, 1984, cited in Abolos, David, "The Politics of the Family," *Journal of Hispanic Policy* vol. 2, 1986–87, page 86). Among 18 to 24 year olds, the actual turnout was only 21.9 percent among Blacks, and 41.6 percent among Whites of the same age. In local electoral politics, there have been considerable advances. The number of elected Hispanics has more than doubled from approximately 1,400 in 1972 to 3,317 in 1987. But Hispanic political empowerment is still at an emergent stage, in large part due to the lack of participation of large numbers of Hispanics in the political process. Less than 1 percent of the 490,000 elected officials nation-wide are Hispanic, considerably less than their 75 percent in the general population (National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, 1987 *National Roster of Hispanic Elected Officials*, Washington, D.C. p. xv).
11. NALEO, op cit.
14. Unpublished figures provided by the Southwest Voter Registration Institute, San Antonio, TX, November 1987.
15. Ibid.
16. Elementary and Secondary Staff Information Survey, (EEO-5), EEOC 1980, cited in Crum, op cit., p. 45. A study of the possible impact of Black teachers on Black students provides concrete suggestion of how increasing representation of Hispanic teachers might increase educational outcomes of Hispanic students. Looking at data from 82 urban school districts, the study found that the greater the proportion of Black teachers the less likely Black students were to be suspended from school, drop out of school, be assigned to special education or educable mentally retarded programs, and the more likely they were to be assigned to enriched classes. See Meir, Kenneth J., "Teachers, Students and Discrimination: The Policy Impact of Black Representation," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 46, 1984, pp. 253-263.
17. *New York Times*, December 4, 1987.
18. Orum, Lori and Arturo Vargas, *Innovative Education Project: Preliminary Report*, National Council on La Raza, Washington, D.C. undated.
19. Ibid., p. 2.
20. Ibid., p. 7.

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## ***Hispanic Poverty, Is It an Immigrant Problem?***

**Abel Valenzuela, Jr.**

*Since publication of Hispanic Poverty, Is It an Immigrant Problem?, when Abel Valenzuela was a graduate student, he has continued to research and publish in the field of poverty, immigration, and inequality. As an Assistant Professor, he holds joint appointments in the César E. Chávez Center and the Department of Urban Planning in the School of Public Policy and Social Research at the University of California at Los Angeles. He is also Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Urban Poverty at the Institute for Social Science Research at UCLA. Professor Valenzuela has a B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley and an MPA and Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Studies from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Professor Valenzuela is currently directing a large research grant from the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation on welfare reform strategies undertaken by women and the role of community institutions in four low-income neighborhoods in Los Angeles. He has also just completed an extensive data collection research project on low-income day laborers in Los Angeles. His work on this subject will appear in a forthcoming book.*

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### ***Abstract***

Many policy analysts, journalists, and academics contend that the relatively high level of poverty among Hispanics in the United States is largely due to the influx of recent immigrants from Latin America. Proponents of this theory argue that most Hispanics have a significantly higher socioeconomic status than commonly believed, and that the low socioeconomic status of immigrants significantly skew downward the statistical indicators for all Hispanics. Using primarily 1970 and 1980 census data, Abel Valenzuela examines eight key indicators of socioeconomic status for both native-born and immigrant Hispanics. He finds that such data does not support the notion that the immigrant is adversely affecting the overall socioeconomic status of native-born Hispanics. Policy initiatives should be geared towards addressing Hispanic poverty in general, with responses tailored to the specific socioeconomic context of ethnic subgroups.

## Introduction

Since the mid 1980's, urban poverty has once again become an important research subject. This is especially evident in the increased number of publications, research endeavors, and stories in the media falling under the rubric of the "underclass." Noted scholar William Julius Wilson has arguably brought to the forefront the plight of the persistently poor and jobless of the African American population.<sup>1</sup> A number of models, theories and hypotheses have attempted to categorically define and describe the urban experience of this group, in particular, and the poor in general. Similar methodologies have been formulated and tested to describe the urban experience of poor Hispanic Americans.<sup>2</sup> This discourse will not analyze (empirically) immigration as a possible contributing factor to a burgeoning Latino urban underclass.<sup>3</sup> Rather it is an effort to analyze the impact of the presence of Latino immigrants on several statistical indicators of poverty for Hispanics taken as a whole.

Some researchers and policy analysts argue that Hispanic poverty is primarily attributable to the increased inflows of immigrants from Latin America. In a recent article published by the Heritage Foundation, Linda Chavez argues that "Hispanics are making precisely the kind of progress one would expect from a group so heavily dominated by non-English speaking immigrants—slow but steady movement into the middle-class by successive generations born in the U.S."<sup>4</sup> Chavez and those who share her views see the Hispanic community as successfully undergoing the same process of assimilation undergone by other immigrant groups in earlier times: initially, poverty as low-skill immigrants, employment in low-paying jobs, struggle with a new language, and instances of racial discrimination and general hardship. This pattern, after several years, is then followed by greater prosperity. Successive generations learn English, and establish social networks and employment niches, which allow them to compete more successfully for higher-paying jobs. Within time, immigrants become fully incorporated into the labor market and eventually reach economic parity with the dominant group.

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*Some researchers and policy analysts argue that Hispanic poverty is primarily attributable to the increased inflows of immigrants from Latin America.*

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Proponents of this theory argue that most native-born Hispanics have a significantly higher socio-economic status than that which is commonly reported. The same is true, they say, of immigrants who have been in the U.S. for a long period of time and who speak English well. To explain Hispanic poverty, they claim that the low socio-economic status of immigrants, especially new immigrants, significantly skews downward the socio-economic statistical indicators of Hispanics overall. Proponents say that high poverty indicators create the image that all native-born Hispanics are as poor as the overall (recent immigrants and native-born combined) when, in fact, most of the poverty in the Hispanic community is isolated within the immigrant population, especially recent immigrants.

If one were to accept this position, asserted primarily by Chavez and other conservative scholars and policymakers, grave consequences in social policy concerning the Hispanic poor could follow. In her article, Chavez argues that evidence of native-born Hispanics' lower economic status is overstated and is used as the basis for unfounded requests for "more money and additional programs" from the federal government.<sup>5</sup>

Other conservative scholars, such as Charles Murray and Lawrence Mead, take the argument a step further.<sup>6</sup> They believe that the creation and perpetuation of "liberal policy initiatives" and social programs are the reasons for current poverty and joblessness among poor Americans. They would argue that poverty among native-born Hispanics and recent immigrants is merely temporary. To alleviate poverty for all poor Americans, including recent immigrants, they would advocate minimal or no social programs for poor people, a more open and competitive economy with minimal government regulation, and the elimination of quotas and preferential treatment for racial groups who have been historically discriminated against. The consequences of such policy prescriptions would indeed be alarming and extremely detrimental to improving the socio-economic status of poor Hispanics and all other poor Americans in the United States.

This article, beyond describing and comparing socio-economic statistical indicators of Hispanic immigrants and native-born Hispanics, addresses the extent of the potential distortion, if any, which the presence of Hispanic immigrants exerts on the socio-economic statistical indicators of Hispanics overall. Would removal of the foreign-born (immigrant)<sup>7</sup> from data collected for all Hispanics (foreign-born and native-born) show a higher or better socio-economic status, thereby supporting Linda Chavez' theory? Or, conversely, are native-born Hispanics not faring any better than their immigrant counterparts?

### **Data and Methodology**

The 1970 and 1980 decennial census, and in some instances the 1960 census, are the primary sources for analysis. Overall, census data is fairly reliable; however, census-based research on the Hispanic population presents unavoidable limitations. Between 1960 and 1980, census procedures for tabulating and publishing information on the social and economic characteristics of Hispanics were revised. This difference limits the accuracy of intercensal comparisons. Furthermore, in 1960 and 1970, the U.S. Census utilized Spanish language or surname as the main identifier of the U.S. Hispanic population. This broad definition led to problems of precisely who was counted within the Hispanic population. In 1980 and 1990, the census utilized a Hispanic origin (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other), ethnic self-identifying method to count the Hispanic population in the country. These different identifiers make comparisons between the two sets of decades less accurate.<sup>8</sup> Despite these limitations, researchers have managed to produce, as accurately as possible, a wide array of comparable data for Hispanics, spanning three census decades, and including numerous socio-economic statistical indicators. In fact, census-based data to date is the most reliable, accurate, and precise information available on the Hispanic population of the United States.

This article compares eight key indicators or variables which attempt to portray the poverty status of Hispanic immigrants and of native-born Hispanics. These variables are:

- Family Income,
- Public Assistance Income by Family,
- Family and Individual Poverty Rates,
- Male and Female Unemployment Rates,
- Male and Female Labor Force Participation Rates, and
- Occupational Distribution of Men and Women.

All of these variables are divided by ethnic subgroups (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American or Other Hispanic),<sup>9</sup> by gender (male or female), place of birth (native-born or foreign-born), and, when available, span three decades (1960, 1970, and 1980). While most of these variables are highly interrelated, they are treated individually to underscore some of the distinct dimensions of socio-economic status. Viewing the data this way enables the examination of the differences<sup>10</sup> between the native-born Hispanic subgroups and the immigrant Hispanic subgroups, which allows for measurement of the impact<sup>11</sup> of immigrants on the statistical indicators for all Hispanics.

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*If . . . Hispanic immigrants are better off than their native-born counterparts, this suggests that immigrants are a more economically endowed group than previously thought.*

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The use of nativity as a unit of comparison allows for separation of foreign-born from native-born.<sup>12</sup> This variable also provides a snapshot of the poverty status of both groups for a particular point in time, and indicates whether this status has improved or worsened between decennial years. For example, if native-born Hispanics are better off than their immigrant counterparts, this suggests that offspring of both immigrants and the native-born are undergoing the process of economic assimilation into U.S. society, and are improving their status relative to their parents and to the Non-Hispanic White (hereafter referred to as "Caucasian") population. If, on the other hand, Hispanic immigrants are better off than their native-born counterparts, this suggests that immigrants are a more economically endowed group than previously thought. Finally, using nativity as a unit of comparison allows for assessment of whether the presence of immigrants increases or decreases the socio-economic statistical indicators of Hispanics overall, and, if so, to what degree.

### Immigrant Effects

Table 1 summarizes precisely how immigrants affected (either "good" or "bad") the rates of the eight socio-economic variables of comparison.

If the presence of immigrants lowered the overall figure of Family Income, increased the percentage rate of the other variables, or decreased the percentage of the Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), the effects of the presence of

immigrants was labeled “bad.” Conversely, if the presence of immigrants increased the overall figure of family income, decreased the percentage rate of the other variables, or increased the percentage of the LFPR, the effect was labeled “good.” “No effect” meant that the presence of immigrants had no effect on the measure.

The data for 1970 indicated that the presence of immigrants skewed downward some of the overall Hispanic poverty indicators:

- Of the eight variables observed, four show a “bad” impact (Family Income, Public Assistance, Family Poverty, and Female Unemployment Rate). However, these impacts are relatively small for three of the four variables, less than 8 percent. The other, Public Assistance, has a relatively high rate, 17 percent.
- Of the same eight variables observed, three show a “good” impact (Individual Property, Male Unemployment Rate, and Male LFPR). These impacts are similar in size to the “bad” impacts. One variable, Female Labor Force Participation Rate, showed no effect.

These results clearly indicate an overall mixed impact. For 1970, one cannot conclusively justify the argument that the presence of Hispanic immigrants, in general, significantly lowered the overall Hispanic socio-economic status.

For 1980, the results also indicate a mixed overall impact from the presence of immigrants. Immigrants did skew downward several of the Hispanic poverty indicators, but only to a small degree. Moreover, the variables that exhibited “bad” and “good” effects for 1980 are not all the same as those for 1970.

- Of the eight variables observed, four show a “bad” impact (Family Income, Family Poverty Rates, Individual Poverty Rates, and Female LFPR). All were less than a 10 percent impact.
- Of the eight variables observed, four show a “good” (ranging from 0.2–15.0 percent impact) or “no effect” impact (Public Assistance, Male Unemployment Rate, Female Unemployment Rate, and Male LFPR).

These results show that the impact of the presence of Hispanic immigrants on the overall Hispanic socio-economic status is mixed—both within the eight variables observed for each decade and between the two decades. These results do not support the argument that the low socio-economic status of the Hispanic population is a reflection of Hispanic immigrant socio-economic status. Instead, they support the argument that the Hispanic native-born and immigrant are relatively the same with respect to socioeconomic status. The similarities between these two groups suggest that native-born Hispanics and children of both native-born Hispanics and immigrants are not undergoing the process of incorporation and participation in the U.S. economy as argued.

To gain further insight from these findings, I will provide: a brief numerical description of the Hispanic population; a description of the socio-economic differences between the immigrant and native-born subgroups using the eight poverty indicators; and a discussion of future research topics and important policy considerations.

Table 1. Immigrant Effects on Hispanic Poverty Indicators

| 1970                                  |                                    |                                 |                                  |      |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|
| Indicators                            | Hispanic Rate<br>Without Immigrant | Hispanic Rate<br>With Immigrant | Immigrant Effect<br>(Difference) | %    |
| Family Income                         | \$6,557                            | \$6,503                         | -\$504 (bad)                     | 7.7  |
| Public Assistance                     | 8.9%                               | 10.4%                           | +1.6% (bad)                      | 17.5 |
| Family Poverty                        | 22.4%                              | 23.7%                           | +1.3% (bad)                      | 5.8  |
| Individual Poverty                    | 25.3%                              | 24.8%                           | -0.5% (good)                     | 2.0  |
| Male Unemployment Rate                | 7.0%                               | 5.8%                            | -1.2% (good)                     | 17.0 |
| Female Unemployment Rate              | 7.8%                               | 8.0%                            | +0.2% (bad)                      | 2.5  |
| Male Labor Force Participation Rate   | 80.4%                              | 81.9%                           | +1.5% (good)                     | 1.8  |
| Female Labor Force Participation Rate | 41.2%                              | 41.2%                           | No Effect                        | 0    |
| 1980                                  |                                    |                                 |                                  |      |
| Family Income                         | \$7,321                            | \$6,731                         | -\$590 (bad)                     | 8.1  |
| Public Assistance                     | 10.8%                              | 10.7%                           | -0.1% (good)                     | 0.2  |
| Family Poverty                        | 19.4%                              | 21.3%                           | +1.9% (bad)                      | 9.8  |
| Individual Poverty                    | 22.4%                              | 23.2%                           | +0.8% (bad)                      | 3.6  |
| Male Unemployment Rate                | 10.0%                              | 8.5%                            | -1.5% (good)                     | 15.0 |
| Female Unemployment Rate              | 9.6%                               | 9.6%                            | No Effect                        | 0    |
| Male Labor Force Participation Rate   | 79.6%                              | 81.9%                           | +2.3% (good)                     | 2.9  |
| Female Labor Force Participation Rate | 54.3%                              | 52.6%                           | -1.7% (bad)                      | 3.1  |



## Hispanics in the U.S.

### *Ethnicity and Nativity*

According to the 1980 U.S. Census, 34.6 percent of all Hispanics were immigrants, a rate practically unchanged from the 1970 rate of 33.9 percent. However, the percentage of immigrants within each subgroup varied a great deal. Table 2 describes the number of Hispanics in the U.S. by ethnicity and nativity; please refer to this table throughout the following discussion.

### *Mexican and "Other Hispanic" Subgroups*

In 1980, 74 percent of the Mexican, and 83 percent of "Other Hispanic," a group composed largely of European Spanish respondents (see endnote #11), were native-born.<sup>13</sup> Between 1970 and 1980, the percentage of native-born Mexicans decreased, while the percentage of immigrant Mexicans increased. The same occurred for the "Other Hispanic" category between 1960 and 1970, but, in 1980, the numbers swung back to approximately their former 1960 level. In both cases, immigrants remained a clear minority.

### *Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans*

For all three decades, a majority of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans were immigrants. In 1980, 51 percent of the Puerto Ricans were island-born, 77 percent of the Cubans, and 80 percent of the Central and South Americans were immigrants.

## Differences Between Immigrants and Native-born Hispanics

### *Income and Earnings*

#### *Introduction*

The relatively large percentage of immigrants in the Hispanic population warrants an analysis between immigrants and their native-born counterparts. How different are the Hispanic native-born and immigrant in their socio-economic profile? As stated earlier, the differences are small; however, an analysis of their differences lends insight into the socio-economic status of all Hispanics. The following section describes more specifically the eight indicators of poverty used in this study by looking at the differences between immigrants and native-born Hispanics during 1970 and 1980.

One way to measure the economic status of Hispanics is to look at family income. According to a report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (1988), the income of the typical (median) Hispanic family dropped significantly over the past decade.<sup>14</sup>

To make an intercensal comparison, Table 3 presents median family income for Hispanics for 1970 and 1980. The data are in real<sup>15</sup> figures that account for the real or actual worth of income, money received through welfare receipts or other income, by accounting for increases in inflation. These data enable more accurate measurement of "real" progress.

**Table 2. Hispanic Population in the United States  
By Ethnicity and Nativity: 1970 and 1980**

| 1970                       |                                    |               |   |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Ethnicity & Nativity       | Percent of Respective Ethnic Group | Total Numbers | Percent of Ttl. Hispanic Pop. By Nativity |
| Mexican                    | 5,250,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 18                                 | 945,000       | 9   |
| Native Born                | 82                                 | 4,305,000     | 41  |
| Puerto Rican               | 1,680,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 54                                 | 907,200       | 8.6                                       |
| Native Born                | 46                                 | 772,800       | 7.4                                       |
| Cuban                      | 630,000                            |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 73                                 | 459,900       | 4.4                                       |
| Native Born                | 27                                 | 170,100       | 1.6                                       |
| Central and South American | 1,575,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 69                                 | 1,086,750     | 10.3                                      |
| Native Born                | 31                                 | 488,250       | 4.7                                       |
| Other Hispanic             | 1,365,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 12                                 | 163,800       | 1.6                                       |
| Native Born                | 88                                 | 1,201,200     | 11.4                                      |
| Total                      |                                    | *10,500,000   | 100%                                      |
| 1980                       |                                    |               |   |
| Ethnicity & Nativity       | Percent of Respective Ethnic Group | Total Numbers | Percent of Ttl. Hispanic Pop. By Nativity |
| Mexican                    | 8,760,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 26                                 | 2,277,600     | 15.6                                      |
| Native Born                | 74                                 | 6,482,400     | 44.4                                      |
| Puerto Rican               | 2,044,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 51                                 | 1,042,440     | 7.1                                       |
| Native Born                | 49                                 | 1,001,560     | 6.9                                       |
| Cuban                      | 730,000                            |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 77                                 | 562,100       | 3.9                                       |
| Native Born                | 23                                 | 167,900       | 1.1                                       |
| Central and South American | 1,022,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 80                                 | 817,600       | 5.6                                       |
| Native Born                | 20                                 | 204,400       | 1.4                                       |
| Other Hispanic             | 2,044,000                          |               |   |
| Immigrant                  | 17                                 | 347,480       | 2.4                                       |
| Native Born                | 83                                 | 1,696,520     | 11.6                                      |
| Total                      |                                    | *14,600,000   | 100%                                      |

*... Figures also indicate that, between 1970 and 1980, the median family income gap between native-born Caucasians and native-born Hispanics is narrowing.*

### *The Numbers*

In 1970 and 1980, immigrant Hispanics had lower real median family income levels than did native-born Hispanics. Between 1970 and 1980, the "real" total Hispanic median family income increased for both native-born and immigrant subgroups by 10 percent and 3 percent, respectively. This accounted for a 53 percent increase in the income gap between the two groups (from \$551 in 1970, to \$1050 in 1980). Over the same time period, Mexicans increased upward of 13 percent in their median family income for both the native-born and the immigrant. Puerto Ricans, on the other hand, experienced a decline in their real median family income between 1970 and 1980—21 percent and 4 percent for the native-born and immigrant, respectively.

**Table 3. Median (typical) Real\* Family Income,  
Native-born and Immigrant Hispanics:  
1970 and 1980**

| 1970                   |             |           |                    |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Hispanic Ethnicity     | Native-born | Immigrant | **Hispanic Overall |
| Mexican                | \$6,421     | \$4,964   | \$5,601            |
| Puerto Rican           | 6,603       | 5,146     | 5,328              |
| Cuban                  | 8,150       | 7,423     | 7,423              |
| Central/South American | 7,423       | 6,967     | 7,240              |
| Other Hispanic         | 6,876       | 6,330     | 6,946              |
| Total                  | 6,557       | 6,006     | 6,053              |
| 1980                   |             |           |                    |
| Hispanic Ethnicity     | Native-born | Immigrant | **Hispanic Overall |
| Mexican                | \$7,364     | \$5,982   | \$6,674            |
| Puerto Rican           | 5,232       | 4,918     | 5,137              |
| Cuban                  | 7,822       | 8,496     | 8,579              |
| Central/South American | 8,307       | 6,624     | 6,826              |
| Other Hispanic         | 7,822       | 7,889     | 7,875              |
| Total                  | 7,321       | 6,271     | 6,731              |

\*Numbers are in 1967 dollars.

\*\*Hispanic Overall = Weighted Average of the Native-born + Immigrant.

Source: 1970 and 1980 Census data (PUMS).

Taken from: Bean and Tienda, 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

Only Cubans exhibited equal or higher immigrant income levels in 1970 and 1980 as compared to their native-born counterparts. One reason for the higher income level of immigrant Cubans could be that immigrant Cubans have a much higher median age and are, therefore, at or close to their peak-earnings potential as compared to the young median age of native-born Cubans (11.4 years compared to 43.1 years, respectively).<sup>16</sup>

In 1970, the total<sup>17</sup> (all five Hispanic subgroups by nativity) real median family income was \$6,557 for native-born Hispanics and \$6,066 for Hispanic immigrants. Comparison of these figures with Caucasians reveals a significant disparity. In 1970, native-born Hispanics made 30 percent less than native-born Caucasians, while immigrant Hispanics made 31 percent less than Caucasian immigrants. During 1980, these figures changed slightly to 27.1 percent and 31 percent, respectively. These figures also indicate that, between 1970 and 1980, the median family income gap between native-born Caucasians and native-born Hispanics is narrowing. This gap remains relatively the same, however, between immigrant Caucasians and their Hispanic counterparts.

### *Public Assistance*

#### *Introduction*

Another way to measure poverty is the degree of dependence on and receipt of government public assistance programs. The censuses for 1970 and 1980 contain a question about the receipt of public assistance income. The data obtained list cash payments under various assistance programs, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).<sup>18</sup> Although the data are not a precise measure of "welfare benefits," the proportion of families who received public assistance income largely represents the receipt of AFDC and other "welfare" benefits usually made only to the very needy. The data for this variable also indicate differences in the share of families who received public assistance income in 1970 and 1980 according to selected characteristics (i.e. nativity), and serve as a rough measure of welfare dependency.

#### *The Numbers*

According to Table 4, the difference in public assistance participation between the total (all ethnic groups) native-born Hispanics and Hispanic immigrants in 1970 was 2.2 percent, with the immigrants having the higher figure (11.1 percent). In 1980, this gap decreases to 0.6 percent. Interestingly, between 1970 and 1980, native-born Hispanics increased their use of public assistance income by almost 2 percent, while the immigrant increased by only 0.4 percent. This may have occurred because a larger total number of native-born Hispanics and immigrants were unemployed in 1980 than in 1970, as the economy was on the verge of a recession.

Puerto Ricans received a higher share of public assistance payments, both in 1970 and 1980, than Mexicans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans. This is not surprising, given that Puerto Ricans experience the highest poverty rates of all Hispanic groups.

The use of public assistance programs by immigrants is an issue that is extremely sensitive. Immigrants are often used as scapegoats by conservative

**Table 4. Differentials in Receipt of Public Assistance Income by Hispanic Family, Native-born and Immigrant Hispanics: 1970 and 1980**

| 1970                   |                 |               |                        |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Hispanic Ethnicity     | Native-born (%) | Immigrant (%) | **Hispanic Overall (%) |
| Mexican                | 8.2             | 11.2          | 9.5                    |
| Puerto Rican           | 16.1            | 21.7          | 21.8                   |
| Cuban                  | 3.6             | 7.6           | 7.4                    |
| Central/South American | 6.7             | 4.4           | 5.7                    |
| Other Hispanic         | 8.6             | 5.6           | 7.8                    |
| Total                  | 8.9             | 11.1          | 10.4                   |

  

| 1980                   |                 |               |                        |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Hispanic Ethnicity     | Native-born (%) | Immigrant (%) | **Hispanic Overall (%) |
| Mexican                | 9.8             | 7.4           | 8.7                    |
| Puerto Rican           | 21.9            | 25.0          | 24.4                   |
| Cuban                  | 1.7             | 7.4           | 7.1                    |
| Central/South American | 7.7             | 10.3          | 10.2                   |
| Other Hispanic         | 8.4             | 5.6           | 7.4                    |
| Total                  | 10.8            | 11.4          | 10.7                   |

\*Hispanic Overall = Weighted Average of the Percent Native-born + Percent Immigrant.

Source: 1970 and 1980 Census data (PUMS).

Taken from: Bean and Tienda, 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

policymakers for decreasing public assistance funds and are perceived as the main beneficiaries of such programs.

According to Table 4, in 1970, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans born outside of the U.S. (immigrant) were more likely than their native-born counterparts to receive public assistance income. By 1980, this difference decreased for Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. Central and South American immigrants had a large increase in public assistance payments, from 4.4 percent in 1970 to 10.3 percent in 1980.

### *Poverty Rates*

#### *Introduction*

According to the 1980 Census, only two major racial groups had annual family incomes below the national average of \$23,092—Hispanic families (\$17,263 or 75 percent of the national average) and Black families (\$15,711 or 68 percent

**Table 5. Poverty Rates for Families, Native-born and Immigrant Hispanics: 1970 and 1980**

| 1970                   |                 |               |                        |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Hispanic Ethnicity     | Native-born (%) | Immigrant (%) | **Hispanic Overall (%) |
| Mexican                | 24.4            | 30.0          | 26.8                   |
| Puerto Rican           | 21.1            | 29.2          | 28.2                   |
| Cuban                  | 3.6             | 13.5          | 13.1                   |
| Central/South American | 17.4            | 13.3          | 13.1                   |
| Other Hispanic         | 21.5            | 18.0          | 20.6                   |
| Total                  | 22.4            | 22.2          | 23.7                   |
| 1980                   |                 |               |                        |
| Hispanic Ethnicity     | Native-born (%) | Immigrant (%) | **Hispanic Overall (%) |
| Mexican                | 19.2            | 24.0          | 21.4                   |
| Puerto Rican           | 28.4            | 34.6          | 33.4                   |
| Cuban                  | 10.2            | 11.2          | 11.2                   |
| Central/South American | 15.4            | 20.0          | 19.8                   |
| Other Hispanic         | 15.0            | 13.5          | 14.4                   |
| Total                  | 19.4            | 23.4          | 21.3                   |

\*Hispanic Overall = Weighted Average of the Percent Native-born + Percent Immigrant.

Source: 1970 and 1980 Census data (PUMS).

Taken from: Bean and Tienda, 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

of the national average). On the other hand, Caucasians and Asian/Pacific Islanders had family incomes at or above the national average in 1980 with incomes of \$24,385 and \$26,575, respectively.<sup>19</sup>

The number of Hispanics living in poverty hit record highs in 1985. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the Hispanic poverty rate (the percentage of Hispanics below the poverty line) was 29 percent.<sup>20</sup> This accounts for approximately 5.2 million Hispanic individuals living in poverty. In 1986, families living in poverty totaled 1.1 million.

#### *The Numbers*

Tables 3 and 4 showed the relatively low income and high welfare receipt figures for Hispanics. These measures are closely related to high Hispanic family and individual poverty rates, as Tables 5 and 6 illustrate.

As stated earlier, the common perception is that recent immigrants have a lower socio-economic status than their native-born counterparts. When one uses poverty level as an indicator of socio-economic status between immigrants and

native-born Hispanics during 1970 and 1980, the results are mixed. Indeed, as Table 5 demonstrates, the total poverty rates are almost equal between Hispanic immigrants and native-born families in 1970. In 1980, the poverty rate is higher for the immigrant compared to the native-born, but by only a 4 percent difference. The 1990 Census will indicate whether or not a trend is occurring depending on whether immigrants are showing worse or improved poverty rates than their native-born counterparts.

Table 5 presents data of poverty rates for Hispanic families. In 1970 and 1980, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban immigrant families had higher poverty rates than their native-born counterparts. In 1970, Cubans had the largest difference at 9.9 percent, while Puerto Ricans and Mexicans followed with 8.1 percent and 5.6 percent, respectively. In 1980, this gap narrowed considerably within the Cuban subgroup, but very little for the Mexican and Puerto Rican subgroups. However, between 1970 and 1980, the poverty rate for Mexicans fell for both immigrants (30 percent to 24 percent) and the native-born (24.4 percent to 19.2 percent). The Puerto Rican poverty rate actually increased

**Table 6. Poverty Rates for Individuals, Native-born and Immigrant Hispanics: 1970 and 1980**

| 1970                    |                 |               |                        |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Hispanic Ethnicity      | Native-born (%) | Immigrant (%) | **Hispanic Overall (%) |
| Mexican                 | 27.2            | 28.8          | 27.5                   |
| Puerto Rican            | 32.8            | 30.7          | 31.6                   |
| Cuban                   | 13.4            | 13.5          | 13.5                   |
| Central/South American  | 13.8            | 17.0          | 16.0                   |
| Other Hispanic          | 21.1            | 23.4          | 24.8                   |
| Total                   | 25.3            | 23.4          | 24.8                   |
| 1980                    |                 |               |                        |
| Hispanic Ethnicity      | Native-born (%) | Immigrant (%) | **Hispanic Overall (%) |
| Mexican                 | 21.6            | 26.5          | 22.9                   |
| Puerto Rican            | 35.8            | 35.4          | 35.6                   |
| Cuban                   | 11.9            | 12.9          | 12.7                   |
| Central /South American | 21.7            | 20.0          | 20.3                   |
| Other Hispanic          | 17.2            | 17.2          | 17.2                   |
| Total                   | 22.4            | 25.2          | 23.2                   |

\*Hispanic Overall = Weighted Average of the Percent Native-born + Percent Immigrant.

Source: 1970 and 1980 Census data (PUMS).

Taken from: Bean and Tienda, 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

for both the immigrants (29.2 percent to 34.6 percent in 1970) and native-born (21.1 percent to 28.4 percent in 1980).

In 1970, the Central and South American immigrant poverty rate was lower than for their native-born counterparts, the opposite occurring in 1980. In both 1970 and 1980, the only Hispanic subgroup in which the poverty rate of the immigrant was consistently lower than that of the native-born was with "Other Hispanics." From this, one can infer that "Other Hispanics" and Central and South Americans, in 1970, had a larger proportion of migrants with monetary and human capital and/or were afforded better opportunities to participate in the U.S. labor market.

When comparing Table 6, Poverty Rates of Individuals, with Table 5, Poverty Rates of Families, similar gaps and trends for both the Hispanic immigrant and native-born are apparent. However, these gaps are not as pronounced (with the exception of the Mexican subgroup in 1980). From the general trends in the data, it can be inferred that the Hispanic native-born and immigrant have relatively similar poverty rates, and that recent immigrants fare nearly as well, and in some cases better, than native-born Hispanics. The extent to which Hispanic immigrant individuals are doing as well or better than Hispanic native-born individuals could be explained by worsening socio-economic conditions for the native-born, or conversely, better economic opportunities for the immigrant.

## Labor Force Trends

### *Unemployment*

#### *Introduction*

By looking at Hispanic individual roles in the labor force, an interpretation of their socio-economic status can be inferred. Unemployment and labor force participation rates are prime indicators of socio-economic status and well being. Occupational distribution and the distributional change over time are often used as a measure of social mobility. The following section looks at the three dimensions of labor force involvement of the Hispanic native-born and immigrant: unemployment, LFPR, and occupational distribution.

#### *The Numbers*

Table 7 presents unemployment rates for Hispanics for 1960, 1970, and 1980. The unemployment rate measures individuals in the labor force who are not employed but actively seeking a job.

As the table shows, the unemployment rate for Hispanic males decreased between 1960 and 1970 by 21 percent (from 7.3 percent to 5.8 percent), and then increased 47 percent between 1970 and 1980 (from 5.8 percent to 8.5 percent). Between 1960 and 1970, women also registered a decrease in their unemployment rate by 16 percent (from 9.6 percent to 8.0 percent). This same figure then increased by 20 percent from 1970 to 1980 (from 8.0 percent to 9.6 percent). During the three decades combined, the male Hispanic unemployment rate increased by 16.4 percent, while the female rate remained steady at 9.6 percent. From another source, the data also indicate that the unemployment rate is higher for 16-24 year olds, compared to those 24 and older.<sup>21</sup>



Table 7. Hispanic Unemployment Rate by Gender, and Native-Born and Immigrant Status: 1960, 1970, and 1980

| 1960                       | Men                |                 |               | Women        |                 |               |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
|                            | Hispanic Ethnicity | Native Born (%) | Immigrant (%) | *Overall (%) | Native Born (%) | Immigrant (%) |
| Mexican                    | 8.3                | 6.2             | 7.8           | 9.4          | 11.8            | 9.9           |
| Puerto Rican               | 8.3                | 8.8             | 8.8           | 10.6         | 11.0            | 10.9          |
| Cuban                      | 4.9                | 8.1             | 7.4           | 10.6         | 9.9             | 10.9          |
| Central/South American     | 8.1                | 5.4             | 6.1           | 8.5          | 7.0             | 7.3           |
| Other Hispanic             | 5.6                | 5.4             | 5.4           | 16.0         | 7.7             | 9.3           |
| Total                      | ?                  | ?               | 7.3           | ?            | ?               | 9.6           |
| <b>1970</b>                |                    |                 |               |              |                 |               |
| Mexican                    | 6.3                | 5.8             | 6.2           | 8.4          | 8.6             | 8.4           |
| Puerto Rican               | 7.7                | 5.7             | 6.0           | 8.2          | 9.4             | 9.2           |
| Cuban                      | 3.2                | 2.6             | 2.7           | 5.0          | 8.2             | 7.8           |
| Central and South American | 8.6                | 4.3             | 5.0           | 8.0          | 6.0             | 6.3           |
| Other Hispanic             | 5.8                | 3.2             | 5.0           | 6.9          | 7.7             | 7.2           |
| Total                      | 7.0                | 4.9             | 5.8           | 7.8          | 8.0             | 8.0           |
| <b>1980</b>                |                    |                 |               |              |                 |               |
| Mexican                    | 8.5                | 8.6             | 8.6           | 8.5          | 12.6            | 9.3           |
| Puerto Rican               | 13.5               | 9.9             | 11.0          | 12.6         | 12.6            | 12.6          |
| Cuban                      | 7.9                | 4.4             | 4.8           | 6.0          | 7.0             | 6.9           |
| Central/South American     | 6.8                | 7.1             | 7.1           | 7.1          | 9.4             | 9.2           |
| Other Hispanic             | 8.4                | 7.2             | 8.2           | 8.0          | 8.1             | 8.0           |
| Total                      | 10.0               | 8.5             | 8.5           | 9.6          | 11.7            | 9.6           |

\*Overall is the weighted average of native-born and immigrant combined.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970 and 1980 Census Data.

The data in Table 7 reveal the following trends among the different Hispanic subgroups, especially when separated by men and women and by immigrants and native-born.

### *Hispanic Men*

Comparing 1960 to 1980, the unemployment rate for all male Hispanic subgroups increased, with the exception of Cubans who actually registered a decrease of 2.6 percent. The subgroups that showed worsened or higher unemployment rates in 1980 were "Other Hispanics," Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans (2.8 percent, 2.2 percent, and .8 percent, respectively).

During the 1960s, and more so in the 1970s, Hispanic immigrants had lower unemployment rates than native-born Hispanics, except for both Cubans and Puerto Ricans in 1960. The Central and South American subgroup was the only subgroup whose native-born unemployment rate was lower than its immigrant counterpart. The other Hispanic subgroups, overall, had lower immigrant unemployment rates than did their native-born counterparts. On the whole, the male unemployment rate for all Hispanic immigrants was lower than the all Hispanic native-born rate in both 1970 and 1980.

### *Hispanic Women*

Comparing 1960 to 1980, the unemployment rate for all female Hispanic subgroups decreased, with the exception of Puerto Ricans, and Central and South Americans. Not surprisingly, throughout the three decades, Hispanic women, overall, showed higher unemployment rates than did men. This also holds true for the immigrant Hispanic woman during the same time period. There is less disparity, however, between native-born Hispanic females and their male counterparts. This is especially true in 1980.

Like their male counterparts, Puerto Rican women, both native-born and immigrant, had a large unemployment gap between 1960 and 1980.<sup>22</sup> This gap is even more pronounced for Puerto Ricans and other subgroups from 1970 to 1980.

Unlike Hispanic immigrant men, Hispanic immigrant women did not generally exhibit a clear trend of lower unemployment rates compared to their native-born counterparts. In fact, throughout the three decades, and especially in 1980, Hispanic immigrant females generally showed higher unemployment rates than did their native-born counterparts.

The unemployment rate for all Hispanic female immigrants was higher than all native-born Hispanic females in both 1970 and 1980. The percentage difference in unemployment between all native-born and immigrant females increased from 2.5 percent in 1970 to 21 percent in 1980, an eight-fold increase. While the unemployment rate between the two groups may have been almost equal in 1970, by 1980 this equality diverged. This is one factor in the 17 percent increase in the overall female Hispanic unemployment rate from 1970 to 1980 (8.0 percent to 9.6 percent).

## ***Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)***

### *Introduction*

Table 8 presents the data for the labor force participation rate (LFPR) of Hispanic persons aged 16–64. The LFPR differs from the unemployment rate in

**Table 8. Hispanic Labor Force Participation Rate, ages 16–64, by Gender, and Native-Born and Immigrant Status:  
1970 and 1980**

| 1970                    | Men                |                 |               | Women        |                 |               |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
|                         | Hispanic Ethnicity | Native Born (%) | Immigrant (%) | *Overall (%) | Native Born (%) | Immigrant (%) |
| Mexican                 | 80.7               | 86.1            | 81.9          | 40.4         | 36.4            | 39.6          |
| Puerto Rican            | 67.4               | 80.5            | 77.8          | 38.9         | 31.4            | 32.9          |
| Cuban                   | 81.0               | 86.7            | 86.0          | 46.2         | 53.8            | 52.8          |
| Central/South American  | 76.8               | 84.5            | 83.2          | 48.5         | 52.7            | 52.1          |
| Other Hispanic          | 84.3               | 83.1            | 83.9          | 44.5         | 47.0            | 45.4          |
| Total                   | 80.4               | 84.0            | 81.9          | 41.1         | 41.2            | 41.2          |
| <b>1980</b>             |                    |                 |               |              |                 |               |
| Mexican                 | 81.2               | 87.7            | 83.5          | 54.2         | 47.5            | 52.0          |
| Puerto Rican            | 67.2               | 77.0            | 73.8          | 47.6         | 39.0            | 41.7          |
| Cuban                   | 70.9               | 87.0            | 85.0          | 60.1         | 64.6            | 64.2          |
| Central /South American | 73.3               | 83.3            | 82.5          | 57.3         | 57.6            | 57.6          |
| Other Hispanic          | 80.3               | 85.2            | 81.3          | 57.0         | 59.0            | 57.4          |
| Total                   | 79.6               | 84.7            | 81.9          | 54.3         | 50.6            | 52.6          |

\*Overall is the weighted average of native-born and immigrant combined.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970 and 1980 Census Data.

Taken from: Bean and Tienda, 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

that it measures the percentage of the civilian population aged 16 and over who are either employed or unemployed (i.e., those people without a job but who are actually looking for one).

### *The Numbers*

Overall, the total Hispanic male LFPR remained stable between 1970 and 1980 at about 82 percent. Hispanic women, on the other hand, increased their LFPR between 1970 and 1980 by 21 percent (from 41.2 percent to 52.6 percent). This particular trend is consistent with the national trend of increasing LFPR for women.

Among the male Hispanic subgroups, Cubans, and then Mexicans, had higher overall LFPR than Puerto Ricans throughout the two decades. Puerto Rican females had the lowest LFPR of any subgroup in 1970 and 1980.

Comparison of the data for the Hispanic immigrant and the native-born Hispanic gives rise to explicit trends. With the exception of the "Other Hispanics" subgroup in 1970, Hispanic immigrant men generally had higher LFPRs than their native-born counterparts during the two periods. In 1960, (data for 1960 not shown in Table 8 but compiled from the same source) the participation rates of Hispanic immigrant women were higher than those of their native born counterparts. This gap narrowed significantly by 1970. By 1980, about 54 percent of native-born Hispanic women were in the labor force, compared to nearly 51 percent of Hispanic immigrant women.

As mentioned earlier, the overall Hispanic male LFPR remained the same between 1970 and 1980. For women, however, this was not the case. Native-born Mexican and Puerto Rican females consistently had higher LFPR rates than did their immigrant counterparts. Immigrant Cubans and "Other Hispanics" had higher rates than their native-born counterparts, with the exception of "Other Hispanic" men in 1970. Overall, Hispanic immigrant and native-born women showed the same LFPR in 1970. In 1980, all native-born Hispanic women had a higher LFPR than their immigrant counterparts (with a gap of 3.7 percent).

### *Occupational Distribution*

#### *Introduction*

When analyzing the occupational distribution of Hispanic men and women during 1960, 1970, and 1980, it should be noted that the distribution only provides a glimpse of socio-economic status since the analysis does not differentiate between good or bad occupations. Moreover, occupational pay, benefits, work conditions, and distribution differ depending on the specific region, time period, and most importantly, type of industry. Furthermore, participating in the labor market, either full-time, part-time or temporary, may not be sufficient for keeping a worker and his or her family above the poverty threshold. The type of job or occupation held (i.e., in the primary or secondary labor market, better known as white-collar or blue-collar) provides a better measure of one's relative socio-economic standing.<sup>23</sup>

White-collar occupations usually provide higher incomes and represent a higher socio-economic status than other occupational categories. Blue-collar

and/or low-skilled service sector jobs, at present, are lower paying, less stable, and represent a lower socio-economic status. This crude and simplistic description, however, does not necessarily hold true for the 1940s–1970s and early years of the 1980s. It was not long ago that traditional blue-collar manufacturing jobs were stable, mostly unionized, and paid relatively high wages. They were considered “good jobs” and were a large share of employment for America’s middle class and earlier immigrant groups.

### *The Numbers*

Table 9 presents the occupational distribution of Hispanic ethnic subgroups by birthplace [e.g., immigrant (noted as foreign) or native-born]. This table illustrates the importance of birthplace in stratifying the work force.

During the 1960s, Mexican immigrant and native-born men and women were predominantly concentrated in the operatives, service, farm labor, and laborers’ occupations. Immigrants were more heavily concentrated in the farm laborer occupations relative to their native-born counterparts. Between 1960 and 1980, however, Mexicans witnessed an increase in their white-collar participation rate (i.e., professionals, managers, clerical, sales), both for the native-born and immigrant subgroups. During this same time period, however, the blue-collar (i.e., crafts, operatives, services, laborers, and farm labor) occupational distribution had an overall increase as well, supporting the notion that a majority of this population continues to be segregated to blue-collar jobs.

Puerto Ricans show varied occupational concentrations according to their nativity. Tienda and Bean<sup>24</sup> explain that these fluctuations reflect not only the changing labor force participation and unemployment rates of Puerto Ricans during the last two decades, but also the altered socio-demographic composition of labor migrants, as well as the massive shifts in the industrial structure of the Northeast.

For Hispanic women, differences between the immigrant and native born did not parallel those of their male counterparts within the same subgroup. For example, Mexican women were the only subgroup for which occupational disparities between the immigrant and native-born increased during the three time periods. Puerto Ricans, in contrast, showed decreases in their occupational differences between immigrants and native-born over the same time period.

## **Conclusion**

### *Future Research*

As mentioned in a previous section, there are certain problems associated with using census-based data, such as the limited comparisons of Hispanics that can be made between census years, and problems related to their race and ethnic definitions. In spite of these limitations, this paper has looked exclusively at the Hispanic population in two distinct time periods. While it is difficult to measure the “impact” of the presence of Latino immigrants on the African American or Caucasian populations, future research focusing on a socio-economic comparison between Hispanic immigrants and other U.S. ethnic groups could be revealing. In particular, Latinos and African Americans would be a starting

Table 9. Occupational Distribution of Men and Women Aged 16–64 by Nativity: 1960, 1970, 1980

|             | Mexican |      | Puerto Rican |      |        |      | Cuban   |      |        |      | Other Hispanic |      |        |      |         |      |
|-------------|---------|------|--------------|------|--------|------|---------|------|--------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|---------|------|
|             | Native  |      | Foreign      |      | Native |      | Foreign |      | Native |      | Foreign        |      | Native |      | Foreign |      |
|             | M       | W    | M            | W    | M      | W    | M       | W    | M      | W    | M              | W    | M      | W    | M       | W    |
|             | %       | %    | %            | %    | %      | %    | %       | %    | %      | %    | %              | %    | %      | %    | %       | %    |
| <b>1960</b> |         |      |              |      |        |      |         |      |        |      |                |      |        |      |         |      |
| Prof.       | 4.6     | 3.6  | 2.5          | 2.5  | 8.6    | 5.8  | 2.5     | 2.7  | 13.2   | 5.4  | 6.4            | 8.3  | 14.4   | 8.7  | 9.7     | 12.6 |
| Mgrs.       | 4.1     | 1.4  | 2.8          | 2.4  | 3.2    | 1.3  | 3.0     | 1.0  | 11.0   | 2.7  | 6.1            | 1.5  | 8.9    | 2.2  | 9.6     | 3.6  |
| Clerical    | 5.2     | 22.1 | 2.4          | 9.5  | 12.4   | 40.1 | 6.9     | 9.9  | 6.6    | 35.1 | 6.5            | 15.6 | 7.8    | 37.0 | 3.7     | 19.8 |
| Sales       | 3.4     | 9.9  | 2.1          | 7.0  | 7.0    | 11.5 | 3.5     | 2.8  | 3.3    | 8.1  | 3.7            | 2.9  | 2.2    | 10.9 | 3.5     | 9.0  |
| Crafts      | 16.4    | 1.1  | 12.6         | 0.9  | 14.5   | 0.0  | 9.3     | 2.3  | 24.2   | 1.4  | 18.7           | 2.0  | 28.9   | 0.0  | 15.4    | 0.0  |
| Oper.       | 26.8    | 27.0 | 19.0         | 36.2 | 30.1   | 28.0 | 43.8    | 72.9 | 18.7   | 33.8 | 31.3           | 55.6 | 16.7   | 23.9 | 13.6    | 36.5 |
| Service     | 8.0     | 25.7 | 7.5          | 29.3 | 15.6   | 11.5 | 18.6    | 7.1  | 15.4   | 13.5 | 20.4           | 12.2 | 3.3    | 17.4 | 18.0    | 15.9 |
| Laborers    | 17.6    | 1.2  | 18.0         | 1.1  | 7.5    | 1.3  | 8.6     | 1.0  | 7.0    | 0.0  | 6.8            | 1.5  | 11.1   | 0.0  | 11.2    | 0.6  |
| Farm/Lab.   | 14.0    | 7.0  | 33.1         | 11.2 | 1.1    | 0.6  | 4.0     | 0.4  | 0.0    | 0.0  | 0.3            | 0.5  | 6.6    | 0.0  | 15.4    | 3.0  |
| <b>1970</b> |         |      |              |      |        |      |         |      |        |      |                |      |        |      |         |      |
| Prof.       | 6.8     | 6.7  | 4.0          | 4.0  | 11.2   | 12.6 | 3.9     | 6.1  | 15.0   | 15.3 | 12.4           | 8.5  | 12.7   | 12.1 | 13.6    | 13.7 |
| Mgrs.       | 4.9     | 2.0  | 2.9          | 1.7  | 6.4    | 0.9  | 2.8     | 1.1  | 14.1   | 2.5  | 6.2            | 1.0  | 8.3    | 3.5  | 8.4     | 1.2  |
| Clerical    | 6.7     | 29.3 | 3.5          | 16.3 | 17.0   | 47.8 | 9.7     | 21.7 | 11.7   | 42.4 | 10.0           | 22.4 | 7.4    | 31.5 | 7.8     | 28.1 |
| Sales       | 3.9     | 7.0  | 2.6          | 3.8  | 5.7    | 8.7  | 3.8     | 3.9  | 6.6    | 8.4  | 6.5            | 5.7  | 5.4    | 8.5  | 3.5     | 4.0  |
| Crafts      | 20.2    | 2.0  | 18.8         | 2.4  | 15.2   | 1.3  | 15.4    | 2.6  | 19.7   | 1.5  | 18.8           | 2.5  | 18.5   | 2.1  | 14.2    | 1.3  |
| Oper.       | 26.2    | 20.9 | 28.2         | 37.0 | 17.7   | 12.4 | 35.6    | 51.7 | 13.1   | 9.9  | 25.3           | 45.7 | 22.9   | 17.9 | 18.9    | 25.1 |
| Service     | 11.0    | 26.2 | 9.9          | 23.5 | 14.5   | 16.0 | 19.8    | 11.5 | 9.4    | 16.3 | 14.5           | 12.5 | 9.9    | 21.2 | 17.5    | 24.5 |
| Laborers    | 13.0    | 1.4  | 14.3         | 1.7  | 11.5   | 0.4  | 7.2     | 0.9  | 7.0    | 0.5  | 5.7            | 1.6  | 9.8    | 0.9  | 8.5     | 0.7  |
| Farm/Lab.   | 7.4     | 4.5  | 15.8         | 9.7  | 0.7    | 0.0  | 1.6     | 0.4  | 3.3    | 3.4  | 0.6            | 0.1  | 5.1    | 2.3  | 7.5     | 1.3  |

Table 9. Occupational Distribution of Men and Women Aged 16–64 by Nativity: 1960, 1970, 1980 (continued)

|             | Mexican |      | Puerto Rican |      | Cuban  |      | Other Hispanic |      |        |      |         |      |        |      |         |      |
|-------------|---------|------|--------------|------|--------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|---------|------|--------|------|---------|------|
|             | Native  |      | Foreign      |      | Native |      | Foreign        |      | Native |      | Foreign |      | Native |      | Foreign |      |
|             | M       | W    | M            | W    | M      | W    | M              | W    | M      | W    | M       | W    | M      | W    | M       | W    |
| <b>1980</b> |         |      |              |      |        |      |                |      |        |      |         |      |        |      |         |      |
| Prof.       | 7.8     | 9.9  | 3.3          | 4.4  | 10.7   | 12.6 | 6.5            | 10.6 | 15.2   | 15.1 | 13.9    | 12.2 | 12.0   | 13.5 | 13.2    | 13.8 |
| Mgrs.       | 6.9     | 3.8  | 3.6          | 2.0  | 6.3    | 3.5  | 6.4            | 2.9  | 9.0    | 5.8  | 13.7    | 4.9  | 10.3   | 5.7  | 7.8     | 3.4  |
| Clerical    | 7.9     | 33.7 | 3.7          | 15.7 | 15.8   | 46.4 | 9.6            | 26.9 | 13.0   | 45.4 | 10.3    | 32.9 | 8.8    | 35.7 | 7.4     | 23.6 |
| Sales       | 3.7     | 5.5  | 1.7          | 3.2  | 5.0    | 6.9  | 2.4            | 3.6  | 8.1    | 9.3  | 7.0     | 5.6  | 5.1    | 7.2  | 3.5     | 4.7  |
| Crafts      | 20.7    | 2.3  | 17.7         | 2.8  | 14.5   | 2.2  | 16.6           | 3.4  | 13.8   | 1.1  | 17.4    | 3.1  | 19.1   | 2.3  | 17.2    | 2.6  |
| Oper.       | 24.0    | 16.6 | 30.0         | 37.2 | 19.7   | 10.8 | 30.6           | 35.2 | 14.1   | 7.3  | 18.5    | 28.0 | 18.0   | 10.5 | 21.3    | 27.2 |
| Service     | 11.8    | 22.9 | 13.0         | 22.2 | 18.0   | 15.8 | 18.1           | 15.0 | 15.5   | 14.5 | 11.8    | 11.7 | 13.8   | 22.4 | 15.3    | 21.2 |
| Laborers    | 12.6    | 2.1  | 14.3         | 3.4  | 9.1    | 1.4  | 8.0            | 2.0  | 10.5   | 1.1  | 6.7     | 1.4  | 10.2   | 1.7  | 10.0    | 1.7  |
| Farm/Lab.   | 4.6     | 3.0  | 12.2         | 8.9  | 0.9    | 0.4  | 1.8            | 0.4  | 0.7    | 0.5  | 0.6     | 0.2  | 2.6    | 0.8  | 4.3     | 1.7  |

Source: 1960, 1970, and 1980 PUMS Files, Bean and Tienda

point in addressing the “blame the immigrant” issues confronting both of these groups. It is likely that since 1980, African Americans, and native-born and immigrant Hispanics, share a more similar socio-economic status than commonly believed. An analysis of the 1990 Census would begin to address this issue.

Some of the data used in this study are over 20 years old. Since 1980, a large number of Latino immigrants, particularly Central Americans, have entered the U.S. Furthermore, the U.S. native-born Latino population has since matured (hopefully this maturity will have transpired into a higher socio-economic status). Unfortunately, the timing of this study does not permit the use of the 1990 Census. Incorporating the 1990 Census could lead to significantly different results—worsened conditions, improved status, or no change. In the 1980s, the U.S. economy deteriorated for working-class Americans in general, and Hispanics in particular. A growing “U-Turn” in income inequality is a persuasive description of the situation for most Americans in the 1980s.<sup>25</sup> It follows that Hispanics, both native-born and immigrant, were affected in a similar, if not worse, vein.

The lack of data on undocumented immigrants makes any empirical analysis of Hispanic immigration incomplete. This is especially true when one considers the estimated 2 million undocumented immigrants in the United States in 1980.<sup>26</sup> Due to political and other socioeconomic factors, immigrants without legal documentation are left uncoun- ted, further exacerbating their invisibility and contributing to their marginalization in all sectors (political, social, and economic) of our society. If these estimated 2 million immigrants (believed to be mostly Mexican and Central American) could be incorporated into this study, however, the results of this analysis would not be altered significantly. Field research on undocumented immigrants from Latin America indicate that their economic, demographic and human capital characteristics are quite similar to those of legal immigrants from the same country.<sup>27</sup>

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*Due to political and other socioeconomic factors, immigrants without legal documentation are left uncoun- ted, further exacerbating their invisibility and contributing to their marginalization in all sectors . . . of our society.*

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Considering the small differences between the Hispanic immigrant and native-born, it makes little sense to treat the two groups differently when considering and implementing anti-poverty policies. Furthermore, the socio-economic similarities between them is an indicator that little economic improvement has occurred for the children of immigrants. The notion that native-born Hispanics, and children of native-born and immigrant Hispanics are not faring any better than recent immigrants is especially noteworthy. American immigration history has shown that with time, immigrants and especially children of immigrants, eventually share similar socio-economic characteristics with their native-born counterparts. Furthermore, the Hispanic native-born, not to mention the Hispanic immigrant, are not reaching parity with the majority of the U.S. popu-



lation. The results of this study suggest that offspring of both immigrants and the native-born are failing to undergo the process of economic assimilation into U.S. society, and are not improving their status relative to their parents, or to the majority Caucasian population.

### Policy Considerations

The results of this study clearly show that the impact of Latino immigrants on native-born Hispanics are, at best, mixed and minimal during 1970 and 1980. Furthermore, the socio-economic differences between these two groups are very small. Compared to other Latinos, Puerto Ricans, closely followed by Mexican Americans, generally have the lowest socio-economic status for both the native-born and immigrant groups during 1970 and 1980. Cubans exhibit the most favorable socio-economic conditions of all ethnic subgroups observed. For all groups, women were worse off than their male counterparts in almost every variable observed.

These findings have several policy implications. The results from this study disprove the assertion that immigrants seriously distort Hispanic poverty statistics. It shifts the argument from "immigrant poverty" to "Hispanic poverty." Overemphasis on immigrant poverty leads to a de-emphasis of overall Hispanic poverty. By virtue of the sheer number of native-born Hispanics relative to immigrants, Hispanic poverty, for the most part, is a reflection of the status of native-born Hispanics. Yet the difference between the native-born and immigrant are too small to warrant separate policies; consequently, any anti-poverty strategy should be inclusive of all Hispanics.

Focusing undue attention or "blaming" immigrants for problems that also affect African Americans and other poor people diverts attention from fundamental poverty issues, and creates anti-immigrant sentiments. This preoccupation with immigrants also seems to effectively divide the Hispanic population. In a country with as many divisions as the United States, including those based on race, class, and gender, a further division would only exacerbate existing conflicts.

Given the similar socio-economic characteristics of the Hispanic native-born and immigrant, it would be good public policy to prescribe similar human capital development programs for both groups. While both groups have a need for interventions, implementation strategies should be tailored to the specific needs of each subgroup. For example, immigrants usually lack the necessary networks, social skills, and command of English for participation in the labor market. Aggressive government, private sector outreach, and other approaches to incorporating immigrants in the labor market can only lead to improved economic conditions for all Hispanics.

## Acknowledgement

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## Endnotes

1. Wilson, William. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, The Underclass and Public Policy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
2. The terms Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably to refer to all (aggregated) Hispanic and Latino ethnic subgroups used in this study. When reference is made to a particular Hispanic ethnic group, the terminology used will be Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, and "Other Hispanic."
3. Some authors have implied a causal relationship between increased immigration and a future Hispanic underclass, most notably George G. Borjas, 1990. *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy*, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers), and Linda Chávez, "Tequila Sunrise: The Slow But Steady Progress of Hispanic Immigrants," *Policy Review*, Spring 1989.
4. Chávez, op.cit., p.22. Linda Chávez is past president of U.S. English, an organization founded to ban official uses of the Spanish language, such as bilingual ballots and bilingual education. Chávez is currently a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
5. Chávez, op.cit., p.22.
6. Murray, Charles. *Losing Ground: American Social Policy, 1950-1980*, New York: Basic Books, 1984; and Mead, Lawrence. *Beyond Entitlement: The Social Obligations of Citizenship*, New York: Free Press, 1986
7. The term "foreign-born" will be used interchangeably with "immigrant" in this paper.
8. For problems specific to use of census data, see Jose Hernández, Leo Estrada and David Alvirez, "Census Data and the Problem of Conceptually Defining the Mexican American Population," *Social Science Quarterly* 53:4 (March 1973): 671-687; Margo J. Anderson, 1988, *The American Census: A Social History* (New Haven: Yale University Press); and Frank D. Bean and Marta Tienda, *The Hispanic Population of the United States*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987.
9. "Other Hispanics" are a residual group of the Hispanic Origin in the Census. This group could include Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. Bean and Tienda, *The Hispanic Population of the United States*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987, surmise that these groups were composed largely of European Spanish respondents. They also include descendants of mixed Hispanic or Hispanic/non-Hispanic couples, and those who selected non-specific labels (for example, Latino, Hispano) to identify themselves.
10. The socio-economic differences between the immigrant and native-born will be assessed through descriptive statistics and changes over time. This analysis will mostly be between 1970 and 1980; 1960 will be assessed when data is available.
11. "Impact" is measured by a simple mathematical procedure. Given three figures A)

100, B) 200, and C) 175, corresponding to the native-born, immigrant, and "overall" (both immigrant and native-born) subgroups, what influence does the absence of immigrants (B) have on the whole group (C)? To do this, I compute the differences between (A) and (C). If the immigrant is taken out of this equation, then the native-born figure alone would be the "overall" rate, thus the difference between the native-born figure and the "overall" figure is the "impact" (i.e., what would otherwise be the "overall" figure minus the immigrant). Dividing this difference, or the "impact," by (A), computes the percent effect.

12. The data for Hispanics in this paper represent individuals who are themselves born or whose parents were born in Central or South America, Spain, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Spanish-speaking Caribbean nations, or who had a Spanish surname (if they resided in the Southwest), or who reported a Spanish mother tongue. "Foreign-born" are those Hispanics who were born outside of the U.S. Likewise, "native-born" are a residual group. This group could include Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. Bean and Tienda (1987) surmise that these groups were composed largely of European Spanish respondents. Lastly, as residents of a commonwealth of the United States, Puerto Ricans are legal U.S. citizens and cannot be classified technically as foreign-born. However, as many studies have demonstrated, the island-mainland distinction operates essentially as a foreign-native distinction for other Hispanic origin groups.
13. See Frank D. Bean and Marta Tienda, *The Hispanic Population of the United States*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987, p.405.
14. *Shortchanged: Recent Developments in Hispanic Poverty, Income and Employment*. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Washington D.C., 1988.
15. "Real" is meant to convey the figures in 1967 dollars. "Actual" is meant to convey 1970 and 1980 dollar figures. In other words, \$1.00 in 1967 = \$1.00, in 1970 \$1.00-\$1.098, and in 1980 41.00 = \$2.174.
16. Bean and Tienda, op. cit., p.345.
17. Throughout this paper, "Total" refers to all five Hispanic subgroups either by immigrant status or by native-born status, never together. "Overall Hispanic rate or figure" refers to all five Hispanic subgroups, including the foreign-born and the native-born, aggregated.
18. Also included in this particular data is general assistance, aid to the blind, and aid to the permanently and totally disabled. The data cannot be separated from Supplementary Security Income, and transfer programs generally referred programs generally referred to as "Welfare."
19. Refugio Rochin, "Economic Perspectives of the Hispanic Community." Paper prepared for the Conference on Persistent Poverty at Trinity University, San Antonio, by the Tomás Rivera Center.
20. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Shortchanged: Recent Developments in Hispanic Poverty, Income and Employment*, November 1988.
21. Unemployment data for 16-24 year olds was compiled from 1970 and 1980 Census data (PUMS) from Bean and Tienda, 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
22. The unemployment gap refers to the difference between the unemployment rate in one year and another year.
23. "Primary and Secondary" are terms used to describe the labor market segmented

by “good” and “bad” jobs used in table. The primary labor market is characterized by educational credentials, certificates, and/or licenses. Jobs in the primary sector exhibit opportunities for career advancement, better pay, and are well-defined. Unionized and “technical” paced jobs are also included in the primary segment. The secondary labor market is characterized by jobs that require little formal training and education, are low paying, offer poor job security, and have high turnover rates.

24. Frank Bean and Marta Tienda, *The Hispanic Population of the United States*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987.
25. The growing “U-Turn” is a thesis presented by two political economists, Bennett Harrison and Barry Bluestone, 1988, *The Great U-Turn: Corporate Restructuring and the Polarizing of America*, New York: Basic Books Inc. The authors argue that since the late 1970s, a variety of economic “crises,” global competition, massive restructuring, low-wage contracting, wage concessions, and the advent of part-time employment along with a conservative, non-intervention government, has led to a lower standard of living for most Americans. These Americans include the employed and unemployed, and middle managers as well as blue-collar workers. Average wages have fallen, family incomes have stagnated, and wages, incomes, and wealth have become more polarized.
26. See Passal, J. S. and K. A. Woodrow, 1984, “Geographic Distribution of Undocumented Immigrants: Estimates of Undocumented Aliens Counted in the 1980 Census by State.” Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May.
27. See *The Effects of Immigration On the U.S. Economy and Labor Market*, by U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, May, 1989. P.158.; Chiswick, B. R., 1988. *Illegal Aliens: Their Employment and Employers*. Kalamazoo, Michigan: W.E. Upjohn Institute.; Papademetriou, D.G. and N. DiMarizio, 1986. *Undocumented Aliens in the New York Metropolitan Area: An Exploration into their Social and Labor Market Incorporation*. (New York: Center for Migration Studies of New York, Inc.); and Massey, D., “Do Undocumented Migrants Earn Lower Wages Than Legal Immigrants? New Evidence from Mexico.” *International Migration Review*. 21 (2): 236–274.

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## *Discovering Latina Women in Boston Politics*<sup>1</sup>

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### **Introduction**

To talk about "discovering" Latina women politics is a little like Columbus "discovering" America: just as the land already existed for its original peoples, Latina women know they have been active politically in Boston for years. Latina women in Boston run for office, register voters, organize and participate in protests, and provide political education for new immigrants. In addition, as will be demonstrated when the definition of "*What's politics?*" is broadened beyond traditional electoral politics, one discovers that Latina women have consistently been the force behind political participation and mobilization in the Latino community.

In this article, I challenge the invisibility of Latina women as political actors that exists in mainstream political science literature, first by revealing their numbers and participation in traditional political roles, and then by examining the way Latina women's politics broadens our definition of political participation.

My conclusions are drawn from a study of the Latino community in Boston, Massachusetts. The community is a relatively small one: Latinos now make up 11 percent of the city's population (U.S. Census 1990). The community is also characterized by considerable diversity. Forty-two percent of the Latinos in

Boston are Puerto Rican; the rest of the community is made up of Central and South Americans (approximately 30 percent), a rapidly increasing Dominican population (13.1 percent), Cubans (3.5 percent), and Mexican Americans (2.5 percent).<sup>2</sup>

In this study I interviewed community activists, influential Latinos, and *la gente del pueblo*.<sup>3</sup> I also participated in numerous community events: protest marches, election campaigns, acquisition and dissemination of voter registration information, community forums, workshops and conferences, and formal and informal discussions throughout the community. In all the observations and interviews I conducted over the two year research period a recurrent theme emerged: Latina women are political actors and play crucial roles in Latino community mobilization.

### **Challenging Invisibility: Latina Women in Traditional Political Roles**

Latina women in Boston have run for office more than their non-Latina female counterparts. Of the six Latino candidates who have run for office in Boston, three were women: Carmen Pola, a Puerto Rican woman, ran for state representative in 1980; Grace Romero won a seat on the Boston School Committee in 1983;<sup>4</sup> and the first Latino person to run for mayor of Boston was not a man but a woman, Diana Lam in 1991. Although, her candidacy was extremely short-lived, the *Boston Globe* belatedly wrote that Diana Lam would have presented the most serious challenge to the incumbent.<sup>5</sup> Thus Latina women in Boston have constituted 50 percent of the total number of Latino candidates in Boston. It might be pointed out that, statewide, many Latina women also have run for office more frequently than their invisibility in the academic press would predict. In Chelsea, a small city across the river from Boston, for example, Marta Rosa was recently elected to the school committee. As path-breakers, Latina women are noteworthy.<sup>6</sup>

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*Latina women have constituted 50 percent of the total number of Latino candidates in Boston.*

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Democratic party politics is also an area of activism for Latina women in Boston. They frequently attend the State Democratic Convention and have served as convention delegates. Women are also extremely active in the Latino Democratic Committee and have served as co-chairs of the Committee.

Efforts to mobilize Latinos to register and vote is another way women have contributed to increasing political participation in Boston's Latino community. I spoke with a Latina woman who runs a major government program and who was instrumental in creating the by-laws for the Latino Democratic Committee. She is also very active in ward politics in her neighborhood. When she identifies key Latino ward workers, she names women in equal proportion to men:

I went back to Jamaica Plain where I had an already active core group of people like Camila Alvarado,<sup>7</sup> like Julio Rojas, Pedro Contreras, like Marisol Quiñones . . . —Marisol Quiñones—. . . She's a *terrific* person and we all knew each other, we lived in Jamaica Plain, active in other things together and we went back and we developed a Jamaica Plain Latino Democratic Committee. This was our local effort as part of the overarching organization, the Latino Democratic Committee. We raised some money, Dukakis came to our fundraiser (emphasis in original).

This core group of three Latina women and two Latino men was the most effective Latino political organizing group in the state; the woman recalled, "We were the stars—we were the stars."

Many Latina women have been involved in voter registration drives. In their roles as legislative aides for various state legislators, for example, Latina women whom I interviewed work to get out the Latino vote in their districts. One influential Puerto Rican man who had been a candidate for office and who has had substantial experience in registering Latinos, acknowledges the contribution of Latina women to voter registration: "I think that women have participated in politics in terms of being active and registering more than men in the Latino community."

Many of these women who are active in voter registration are influential, professional Latinas in their early 30s and 40s. However, older Latina women whose roots are with *la gente del pueblo* likewise work to register eligible Latinos. What these women have in common are their humble roots, community and electoral activism, and network of relationships in the Latino community.

These women are typical of the *portavoces* or *alcadezas* of the community. In English, a *portavoz* is literally a megaphone, but is used to refer to a spokesperson; an *alcadeza* is the female form of *alcalde*, mayor—this term connotes a woman of great influence.<sup>8</sup> In an anecdote shared by a woman from South America who has mobilized Latinos in her neighborhood to join protests and to vote, one of these *portavoces* literally used a *portavoz* (megaphone) mounted on top of her car to publicize election day and rally the Latino neighborhood to get out and vote.

Another of the ways Latina women contribute to traditional politics in the Latino community of Boston is their role of *connector*, providing a link between City Hall and the community. When politicians want a Latino presence at a rally, they call on certain key women. When the mayor's offices need a Latino presence at rallies, these women are called. One woman explains:

Han tenido reuniones en el State House, y Juan [the Mayor's Hispanic Liaison] me llamó . . . y también, cuando iban a dar nombramiento a [Mayor] Flynn, y querían que hubieramos muchos hispanos—me llamaron.

There have been meetings at the State House, and Juan [Hispanic Liaison] called me . . . and also, when they were going to honor [Mayor] Flynn, and they wanted a large group of Hispanics—they called me.

She recalled another time when Mayor Flynn's office called her. In an effort to gain visibility and votes in the community, the Mayor wanted to hand out toys to Latino children at Christmas time. His connection to the community was a Latina woman.

Latina women who work within the system of electoral politics as well as those who operate more at the grass-roots level, are able to “deliver” large numbers of Latinos to show support for candidates and to increase voter registration. They are candid about the fact that the (male) officials are getting the Latino people there to attract votes within the Latino community. In this role they are serving the interests of the establishment; nevertheless, they are also working to draw fellow Latinos into politics.

### **Gender and Politics in Latino Scholarship: The Invisibility of Women**

Contrast this presence and activism in traditional political roles with the invisibility of Latina women as political actors in the mainstream social and political science literature. While there have been occasional writings on the life experiences of Latina women following migration,<sup>9</sup> some mention of Latina community leaders or elected officials,<sup>10</sup> and some recent attention to Mexican American women in community organizing efforts,<sup>11</sup> there has been little research which includes an explicit goal of exploring Latina women and politics.

Mainstream social science research tends to restrict the study of women, in general, and of Latina women specifically, to their social roles. Most writing on Latina women focuses on women in the labor force, as victims of poverty, and, predictably, in relation to children. Other topics discuss Latina women's health, illness, mental health and mental illness.<sup>12</sup>

In general, Latina women are portrayed in this literature as “three times oppressed”—by racism, sexism, and cultural traditions (Melville 1980, Mirandé and Enríquez 1979, and Barragán 1980). The stereotype of the Puerto Rican and Mexican woman, in particular, is that of passivity and submissiveness. *Marianismo*, the feminine correlate to and opposite of machismo, derives from the image of the Virgin Mary—meek, mild, and supportive of men. Assertiveness in social, public, and political arenas by Latina women supposedly runs counter to these cultural traditions. Garcia and de la Garza (1977) include reference to a Latino tradition of “strong women” but these women are mythical figures; one would have to conclude that we are only comfortable with women in their reproductive roles or as goddesses.

In all of these books and articles, the political life of Latina women is rendered invisible. And yet, these women play an crucial role in mobilizing Latino communities.<sup>13</sup> How they think and work politically may be the missing link in achieving the goal of increasing Latino political participation. But first, we must examine the reasons for their invisibility in the mainstream academic literature.

### **Reasons for the Invisibility of Latina Women as Political Actors**

One explanation for the invisibility of Latina women in political science was provided by a 34-year-old Puerto Rican woman activist in Boston. As we discussed a Latino community organizing resource center in Boston, I asked her if



I should speak to a man I had heard was the president of the organization. She answered, somewhat indignantly, "I don't know how people got the idea that it's a man. I think it's more in people's minds how they perceive things. You can have ten women, but if there's a man, 'Oh, he must be the president!'"

This woman attributes the invisibility of women in politics, specifically as leaders, to a particular mindset: leaders must be men. She herself holds no lofty position and is not acclaimed in the Anglo press as a "leader"; she works to organize others politically. Her politics are not the politics of positions and public speeches; who is president is less important to her than achieving change. However, she leads in the truer sense of engendering a passion in others for social action and social change. Her work, and the work of other women like her, is rendered invisible by the mindset of researchers who look at public, official, and titular politics.

The (male) co-founder of the Latino Democratic Committee and former candidate, gives a related explanation: "Men are more easy to spot—and I told you that there are less men active in politics—although we make more noise than women." According to Latina women, some men, and researchers such as Pardo (1990), the male drive for public prominence in political life overshadows the mobilizing work of Latina women. Since the mainstream academic press (and the mass media) focuses on people in positions, the politics of women, especially in political roles that are outside of official positions and without official titles, are rendered invisible.<sup>14</sup>

A second explanation for the invisibility of Latina women in mainstream political science is that women in general—not just Latina women—have traditionally been left out of political analysis. Male political scientists such as Dahl (1961), Hunter (1953), and Lane (1962, 1969, 1972) have influenced the field of politics for decades; however, throughout their research, they have either ignored the role of gender in political theory or generalized to the population as a whole from the study of (typically white) men.

For example, Dahl's (1961) *Who Governs?* and Hunter's (1953) analysis of community power structure simply assume that "the people you study are men" (Bourque and Grossholtz 1974, 253). Others, like Robert Lane's works on "political man" (1972), political consciousness (1969), and political ideology (1962) imply knowledge about people in general but are drawn from interviews conducted exclusively with White men.

In other cases, women have been present in the research, but the role of gender is ignored. For example, when Wilson and Banfield "revisited" the political ethos theory in 1971, they interviewed male homeowners in Boston. They mention in a footnote that *thirty-five percent of the black homeowners and thirty-two percent of the Irish homeowners were actually women* (Wilson and Banfield 1971, 1050; emphasis added). However, Wilson and Banfield discuss neither the possible impact of gender differences on political ethos nor the fact that these gender differences correlate directly with the ethnicity variable that is the major focus of their research.

The research on non-White women is likewise deficient. Women appear as a minority group, but minority women in politics are less likely to receive atten-

tion. For example, Bayes' (1982) book on minority politics in the United States includes chapters on the politics of the Black minority and the Chicano minority. However, when she addresses women in politics, the subject becomes women *as a minority*, not minority (non-white) women in political life.

Research on Latino political participation seems to follow the mainstream model of being a male preserve of knowledge—Latina women in political roles are ignored or dismissed. Women appear only in tangential ways: women are wives of candidates (Foley et al. 1977). Where they do appear, their contribution is reduced to a few sentences and paragraphs dispersed throughout an entire book (Gómez-Quíñones 1990). Most books on Latino politics include no mention of women in their chapter titles or index, or ignore them completely (Villarreal et al. 1988, Garcia 1988, Jennings and Rivera 1984, Gómez-Quíñones 1990, Hero 1992).

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Guzmán, identifies Chicana women as important reputational leaders within Mexican American communities and states that “the role of women as community leaders among minority groups has been neglected by scholars” (Guzmán 1976, 165). However, he fails to remedy this neglect when he devotes only two paragraphs in his book to this subject (1976, 60). Guzmán does include a discussion on barriers to the political socialization of Mexican American women (1976, 231–234). However, by discussing women as *blocked* from participating, he contributes to their invisibility in activist roles. And, although Santillan mentions the “increased visibility and participation of Hispanic women in the electoral process” (1988a, 337), in a later article, he dismisses the Latina contribution to politics:

The social inequality of labor based on both gender and wages has naturally spilled over into the urban political arena where Latino men are self-appointed as community leaders while women are relegated to the level of campaign supporters. As a result of this political discouragement, many Mexican-American and Puerto Rican women are redirecting their resources and energies into the fields of education, social services, law, and the private sector. *The near total absence of Latinas in community politics seems almost to guarantee the delay of any substantial social progress in these urban communities for the present* (Santillan 1988b, 474; emphasis added)

Even research on broader topics, such as Portes and Bach's (1985) *Latin Journey*, continues the pattern of generating conclusions based on research conducted solely on men. *Latin Journey* presents an analysis of the labor market experience of Latino immigrants in the United States as if it were generalizable to all Latinos. One has to search to find the one sentence that reveals that the data is drawn from Latino men only. Portes and Bach admit briefly that this is a flaw of their research, but what is their remedy? They later ask the men about other family members, “including wives.” Latina women's own experiences and roles other than as wives are ignored.

A final explanation for why Latina women are invisible in mainstream literature may be found in the very way politics is defined. When gender differences are scrutinized, researchers typically compare women to men on behavioral measures of politics dominated by men and defined, most often by men, as politics: organizational membership, voting rates in elections, and attitudes about political participation. (See, for example, Christy 1987, Klein 1984, Baxter and Lansing, 1981, Welch and Secret 1981, Powell 1981, Rule 1981.) While there is nothing inherently wrong with such a comparison, our understanding of the political life of women is constrained by male definitions of politics.

### **Latina Women in Politics: An Alternative Vision**

Ignored—or rendered invisible—Latina women have been denied recognition of their political roles in the mainstream literature. One might ask at this juncture why I am focusing so much attention on Latina women in political roles that reflect traditional conceptions of political life (running for office, joining party organizations, conducting voter registration drives, and connecting elected officials to Latino community residents) especially if one of my major points is that the definition of politics in these terms is a gendered construct. There are two answers to this question.

First, my point here is *not* that what the Latina women do as candidates, as ward leaders, or as promoters of Latino voting is necessarily different from non-Latinos, or even from men. My point *here* is “simply” that Latina women are political actors in Boston. They are participating in traditional political roles with great enthusiasm, effectiveness, and dedication.

However, the fact that Latina women demonstrate activism in electoral politics—traditional politics—is not really a simple point. It runs counter to the view of the apolitical Latina woman, the passive and submissive Latina woman, that is the prevailing view. These are *Latina* women—the very women who are identified in the literature as submissive, passive, subordinated, and oppressed. Puerto Rican women, Dominican women, Mexican American women, and Central American women in Boston—with their actions, their words, and their perspective on politics—challenge the image of the passive, submissive, and apolitical Latina woman. We cannot underestimate the importance of rendering visible the contribution of these women to Latino electoral politics.

Second, what is more important in this discussion of Latina women and the nature of politics is that, in addition to the activism of Latina women in *traditional* political roles, Latina women were identified by both men and women as

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*Latina women were identified by both men and women as  
being the driving force for pulling Boston's Latinos  
into political participation.*

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being the driving force for pulling Boston's Latinos into political participation. In addition to their roles as *connectors* between City Hall and the community,

Latina women are *connectors* as they connect members of the community to each other to solve community problems. As several Latinos said, "There's more to politics than just voting." If politics is more than elections and public office—if we say that politics is about people joining together, collective efforts, better life conditions, or redistributive justice, the role of Latina women in mobilizing Latinos becomes more visible. If "the challenge is to envision the human future and then to inspire a passion in others for that vision" (Barber 1984, 171), the question to be asked is: If there is more to politics than electoral politics—the politics of representation—then how do gender and culture shape our understanding of this alternative?

### Gender and the Construction of "What's Political?"

How does gender limit or enhance the definition of politics? One is reminded of Simone de Beauvoir's observation that men "describe the world from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth" (de Beauvoir 1952, 133; quoted in Ferguson 1987, 210). Some suggest that part of the reason politics is defined in terms of public behaviors and formal organizations is that public life *is* the male life and so politics has become defined in masculine terms as the public politics of elections, office holding, and political party (Ferguson 1987). In other words, the classical theory of politics as self-interested, atomistic, and, above all, public, is, in reality, a theory based on masculine experiences that stress self-interest, public forums, and hierarchical struggles for self-advancement. Under this theoretical framework, if we mean politics is about electoral conflicts—then men rule.

Within the "absolute truth" of politics as constructed by men exists the essentially hierarchical ladder of representative government in which a few are elected to represent the interests of the many. And within much of current political theory, there exists a parallel hierarchy of political behaviors in which electoral politics is identified as "politics" while a whole wealth of political life is called a variety of other names: community organizing, community politics, grass-roots politics, to name a few. Above all else, the male image of politics is a politics of public life, of hierarchical representation, and of measurable behaviors, such as the vote.

A vision of participatory democracy is very different. Participatory democracy, as an alternative vision, is firmly rooted in beliefs about community, collective organization, self-government, and, above all, opportunities for participation by the maximum number of community members. Empirical examples of such participation in action and how an increase in participatory experiences is brought about are rare." Another limitation of existing theories of participatory democracy is that the role of gender, again, receives little attention in current participatory theories.

"Grass-roots" politics is a term often used to reflect a more community-focused type of politics that involves greater opportunities for self-government and self-direction and that increases participation by the many rather than restricts it to the elite few. One of the major splits in how politics is defined is

between “politics” and “community organizing.” However, political participation in a participatory model is the politics of local efforts to achieve change. The tension between local efforts on local issues and efforts to elect representatives to tackle larger issues is a false tension in participatory theory. Contrary to Schattschneider’s (1975) view of a hierarchy of “experts” and “ignorants,” there is a vision of people becoming self-governing at all levels of government, in the workplace, and in the community, through the act of participating.

### **Latina Women and Participatory Theory**

This alternative vision of blending self-government, community efforts, and personal/private issues with public issues is not the unique purview of feminist political theory. However, it is true that the political lives of women, and of Latina women specifically, are examined with a less biased eye in the feminist press. Unfortunately, most of this literature is on Chicana politics.<sup>16</sup> There are only a few articles on Puerto Rican women in political roles; these include works by Cerullo and Erlien (1984) on Latina women in the Mel King campaign in Boston, Bonilla-Santiago (1989) on Latina legislative activities in New Jersey, and Pantoja and Martell (1989–1990) on Latina politics in New York City. A few writers examine Mexican American and Puerto Rican women working together: Bonilla-Santiago (1991) discusses Latina leadership roles in the United States, and Campos Carr (1989) describes group consciousness-raising projects in the multi-ethnic Latino communities of three Illinois cities.

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*“At the grass roots, the community level, women  
have been the major force for change.”*

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Latina women in Boston provide empirical evidence of a broader expanse of political activism at the grass-roots level. Even Latino men comment on this fact. For example, one male community activist describes the presence of women at the grass-roots level of politics in Boston: “I say that women have been a major force at the grass-roots level in the Hispanic community—from the day we came here, from the day we came to the United States. *At the grass roots, the community level, women have been the major force for change.*” (emphasis added) Another man, a Puerto Rican elected official, told me that Latina women are crucial at the electoral level of politics, and he ties the women’s political skills to their relationships with the community:

I think more than anything else, women have a lot more potential, Hispanic women have a lot more potential for getting elected. [I ask: Why is that? and he replies:] Because they’re more involved in the community; they’re organized—they’re better organizers. I don’t want to make these general statements, but they communicate better with people; they’re there in the community, they’re in the trenches all the time; they deal with the children, they deal with the household and they may work, but they have—I think they have a stronger network, where men have—sort of—these networks, but I think they’re weaker, whereas the women have a stronger network.

In developing my lists of Latinos to interview, I began with the reputational leaders—people in the news, individuals commonly described as “leaders.” On this preliminary list, sixty percent of the names were men. However, when these individuals were asked: “Who draws Latinos into participation?”—the list reversed itself to sixty percent women. In fact, aside from agency directors, functionaries, and people who hold jobs in city or state government, the vast majority (over 75 percent) of the people who were able to influence or draw people into the political process were women.<sup>17</sup>

It would be impossible to include all the ways the Latino men and women I interviewed lauded these women; a few quotes will have to suffice. “If you look at our community, you will see—if you look through the gamut and count numbers, there are more women working into the politics of empowerment of the community than there are men,” states Tamara González. Another woman gives testament to the strong presence of Latina women in community politics despite the constraints Latina women face because of sexism and male concerns over power and turf:

The pecking order is such that it takes women a while to get involved, but, usually when they get involved, they get more involved [than men]. But around community-based struggles, I have *never* seen one where the women were not *extremely* involved (emphasis in original).

Latina women in Boston, in their efforts to mobilize the community, embody key elements of a more participatory vision of political life. Women’s vision of politics includes a stronger sense of community, cooperation, and collective processes of organization. Ferguson (1987) summarizes the gender differences in how women view political participation:

Women, on the whole, are more embedded in (and more aware of their embeddedness in) social relations than are men; women, as a group, are more inclined toward a morality of responsibility and caretaking, while men, as a group, give more allegiance to an ethic of rights and obligations; women’s experience tends to incline them toward greater appreciation of the concrete and relational, while men give greater credence to that which is abstract and disembodied (Ferguson 1987, 213).

Feminist theorists<sup>18</sup> explore the meaning of political participation and help define the nature of politics in ways that male theorists such as Schumpeter (1943), Schattschneider (1975), Sartori (1962), and Verba and Nie (1972), who worried about global stability (and Anglo-American hegemony) did not.

One of the central debates in feminist theory that has implications for my study of politics is the question whether women see the world in ways different from men, in more relational terms (Gilligan 1982, Flanagan and Jackson 1990, Dietz 1989). Gilligan (1982), for example, reexamines the moral base of women and brings to light the caring and relationship orientation of women in resolving social and personal issues. She argues that women view the world differently from men. Gilligan (1982), Chodorow (1974) and Tannen (1990) claim that personal interrelationships and connection are more important for women than for men. They also suggest that men view the world in positional terms, in terms of personal status, rather than in the relational terms of connection and intimacy. Some posit that the differences are rooted in biology and others that they are socially constructed.<sup>19</sup> Regardless of the source, the implication for

political mobilization is that if political mobilization is more likely to occur when interpersonal relationships are the basis for politics, rather than access to hierarchically determined positions, then how women view politics is an essential element in any struggle for a more participatory America. The experiences of Latina women in Boston suggest that a more personally connected politics and a vision of politics as an interactive process based on personal relationships is more effective in mobilizing the Latino communities than a male vision of politics as access to power, positions, and formal structures (Hardy-Fanta 1991, 1993).

A second debate that frames the issue of gender differences and participatory theory is the permeability of the boundary between private and public politics. Juanita Fonseca, in her office at City Hall, said to me, "The personal is political. . . . What happens every day is politics. What's going on right now—whether I agreed to meet you today—is politics." And Carmen Gómez, a woman from South America who runs a social service agency, quietly declared: "Everything is political." These views support Evans' (1980) earlier contentions about personal politics—that the distinction between the personal and the political is artificially constructed.

For Latina women in Boston, politics is an interpersonal politics—a politics that blends personal relationships into political relationships. Josefina Ortega illustrates how connectedness and mutual relationships increase Latino political participation by weaving politics into the fabric of daily life. She also illustrates how electoral politics are not in a hierarchical relationship with participatory politics, but form an inseparable thread, perhaps a continuum, one dependent on the interpersonal relationships of everyday life.



### **Portrait of Josefina Ortega: Connection and Mutual Relationships**

Doña Fina, as she is often referred to, is a woman in her 60s who was born in a "humble family" in Puerto Rico. She came to New York when she was 23 years old and became a professional singer of Puerto Rican folklore. She came up to Boston in 1966 and has spent much of her time here organizing and conducting dance classes for children in a studio in the basement of her modest home.

When I introduced myself on the phone she made comments like "*Pues, yo no tengo mucho que ver con eso de la política.*" But with a little encouragement, she revealed that she does know many people who are politicians and that they have called and said, "Fina, we need a hundred people at this meeting." They count on her ability to bring people to political events—an ability based on her connections to people in the community—to *la gente del pueblo*.

Josefina Ortega has numerous plaques and awards on her dining room wall honoring her community contribution, but she has not used her political connections to distract her from her community connections. Her major focus continues to be on the dance and on helping Latino children maintain their folklore, culture, and artistic heritage. Her dream is to develop a truly community-ori-

ented cultural center. In contrast to old-time ward bosses she does not use her political connections for personal gain. She has never moved into any official position and continues to relate to the community as a dance instructor, as an organizer of cultural events, and as a volunteer at a program for *los ancianos* (the elderly) at a local community center. She encourages *los ancianos* to come out of their isolation by serving traditional Latin meals and joining them in traditional Latin songs. Doña Fina combines these cultural events with her concern about community problems. Because she knows so many people and is trusted by them, when she calls and says something is important, they respond.

Doña Fina and her grown daughter, who was present at the interview, also participate in electoral politics. She and her daughter attended the Democratic Party caucuses in February 1990. Josefina votes consistently and sees the vote as a crucial tool for community betterment. She also works on getting people registered and urging them to vote. She said she knows which of her friends are registered and which are not. She is one of the women described as putting a megaphone on the top of her car to publicize election day.



This portrait suggests several important lessons for political analysts and mobilizers: connections must exist within a relationship built on mutuality and reciprocity. Because Josefina Ortega *gives* of her time and energy *to* the children, when she calls on the parents for a political rally, they respond. She donates much of her time for free, often charges no money for her dance classes and perceives herself as not being in it for herself. She does not use her political activity or connections for personal gain, but because of a belief in a public good, that something needs to be done to help people.

For Josefina Ortega, a political life consists of intertwining cultural activism, everyday relationships, dance instruction, and electoral politics. Latina women, in fact, mobilize around and through issues related to their daily lives. Women writing on Latin American women in politics support this notion that women's roles in the family may stimulate, rather than inhibit, political activism (Aviel 1981, Boneparth 1981).

Doña Fina also dispels the notion that alternative forms of politics suppress electoral politics; she is intimately involved with voting and elections. In many ways, she reflects the woman's way of combining everyday relationships and political activism. Her life as a political mobilizer clearly challenges the distinction between private and public spheres of politics and suggests that this distinction is a social construct rather than a reflection of a universal political reality. Her success in increasing Latino participation, even in electoral politics, is due precisely to her personal relationships.

Political participation, thus, is woven into the fabric of daily life. The boundary between public and private becomes blurred. People in poor communities, like the Latino community in Boston, may not respond to mobilization efforts that focus solely on the electoral and formal realms of politics:

More than anything, the low rate of voter registration and the use of the franchise, particularly by the poor, are evidence not of apathy, but of realism. Until we broaden our definition



of politics to include the everyday struggle to survive and changing power relations in our society, working class [I add—Latina] political action will remain obscured (Morgen and Bookman 1988, 8).

It is the feminist literature, also, that at least touches on the Latina woman's political contribution. Compared to the dearth of attention to women in the Latino politics literature written by men (see above), the feminist analysis of Chicana women's community organization focuses not on elections, but on political development; not on voting rates, but on ways of enhancing broader community participation. Mary Pardo, for example, writes: "The relatively few studies of Chicana political activism show a bias in the way political activism is conceptualized by social scientists, who often use a narrow definition confined to electoral politics" (Pardo 1990, 1). Instead, she focuses on the *process* of, what she calls, "transformation" to describe how non-participants develop political consciousness and political skills. She reiterates, as well, my earlier point when she cautions "against measuring power and influence by looking solely at who holds titles" (Pardo 1990, 3).

### Gender, Politics and Power

The meaning of power is central to any theory of politics and political participation. However, the question of whether gender differences exist in how power is defined is another issue facing us in reconceptualizing politics in terms less biased by male experiences. For women, politics appears to mean the power to change rather than power over others. For example, a Mexican American woman who works in the human services profession, describes what politics is for her:

It's promoting change. And if you're promoting change, then you need to go about being there and identifying [problems] and knocking on doors and telling people, "We're here, this is what we need, and we want to do it for ourselves." That's political, that's what I mean by politics, that's what politics means to me.

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*For women, politics appears to mean the power to  
change rather than power over others.*

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She echoes Jean Baker Miller who suggests that male concepts of power as "the ability to augment one's own force, authority, or influence and also to control and limit others—that is, to exercise dominion or to dominate" do not acknowledge women's view of power, which is "the capacity to produce a change" (Miller 1983, 3–4). For women,

Power could be translated into empowerment, the ability to act with others to do together what one could not have done alone. Empowerment stresses the cooperative dimensions of human interactions and seeks to engage our imaginations, extend our potentialities, enable us as collective actors, ultimately to enrich our lives. . . . Empowerment, like power, is a process (Ferguson 1987, 221–222).

In other words, politics is the forum for achieving change. Women have concepts and styles of exerting power that achieve change without exercising dominion and control over others.

Latino men, in contrast to Latina women, were twice as likely to focus on power as politics than the women (Hardy-Fanta 1991, 365) and to see politics as the "power over." For example, Armando Meléndez is a Puerto Rican man who is very well known in Boston's Latino media and who, while dismissing personal ambitions, admits he could "easily be elected" because everyone knows him. When we were discussing the role of the media in affecting political participation, he said, "If I get on the radio and say, 'Edwin Colina [a Latino official in Boston] is a bad person,' then Edwin Colina becomes a bad person. You know, 'Armando Meléndez said that—gee, if he said it, it's true.'" In this example, he uses a hypothetical situation to show that 1) he has power to influence what people believe (even if it is not true), and 2) that power could negatively affect the aspirations of fellow person.

### Gender and Hierarchy: Different Images of Politics

In the feminist view, formal, especially hierarchical, organizations stifle participation. Male-orchestrated public forums, with their panels of experts, speeches, and rules of order, limit the free exchange of ideas, inhibit tentative explorations of new ways of thinking about community problems, and prevent the development of the personal relationships that lead to political activity.<sup>20</sup> Women's skills at personal relationships set up looser affiliative groupings which are "nonhierarchical and decentralized," which "encourage individual initiative and, at the same time, . . . respect interdependence and cooperation" (Hamilton 1989, 131). Latina women in Boston stress consciousness-raising, collective, non-hierarchical political organization and less formally defined leadership.

In conclusion, Latina women make up a large proportion of Latinos in traditional political roles. Empowering Latinos is the goal of most community activists in Latino communities and Latina women in many communities across the United States are important political actors. This fact alone merits more attention than it currently receives. However, I suggest that, even more important to the future of Latino political participation in this country, mobilization strategies based on male visions of politics and power cannot work. It is time to bring to light the contribution of Latina women working in politics, to document their effectiveness in mobilizing the communities, and to learn from their methods.

### Endnotes

1. Portions of this article, and a more extensive exploration of gender differences in Latino politics, have appeared in a book by this author: *Latina Politics, Latino Politics: Gender, Culture and Political Participation in Boston*, (Hardy-Fanta, 1993). See also Hardy-Fanta (1991).
2. Source: 1990 Census for Puerto Rican data; other data is from Osterman (1992).

- Please note that the Puerto Rican population data in the Census differs from Osterman's data; I utilize Osterman because the Census data for Latinos other than Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Mexican Americans are not available for Boston.
3. *La gente del pueblo* literally translates to "the people of the village." The term is generally used to mean "the common folk," or "the masses."
  4. It should be noted that the campaign of Grace Romero was deeply rooted in the black community; nevertheless, she was a Latina women.
  5. Diana Lam's candidacy lasted only three days because of extensive news coverage of her family's failure to submit certain IRS tax returns until shortly before she declared she was running for office. This news coverage overshadowed her campaign platform and she withdrew. It was only after her withdrawal that the *Globe* began praising her appeal to many dissatisfied constituencies in the city. In addition, even *before* her financial difficulties were exposed, the *Globe* downplayed her candidacy—the announcement she was challenging Mayor Flynn appeared "below the fold." For an analysis of how the news media treats minority candidacies, see, for example, Alberts (1986).
  6. Although my research is not a comparative study of Latina women and women of other racial/ethnic groups, it is useful to point out that Latinas may be running for office in greater numbers than their Anglo counterparts. For information on the proportions of women as candidates, see, Darcy and Schramm (1977), Rule (1981, 61), Karnig and Walker (1976), Darcy and Hadley (1988, 638).
  7. All names other than public figures are pseudonyms.
  8. Sacks (1988) and Garland (1988) would call them "centerwomen."
  9. See, for example, Sánchez Korrol (1983, 85–117).
  10. Pachon states, for example, that, despite the stereotype of machismo in the Latino community, "more Hispanic women vote than men; and while there is a large under-representation of Hispanic women in public offices, the proportion of Hispanic women in elected office is larger than for society in general. Nationally, women hold only 12 percent of all elected offices. In the Hispanic community, women hold 18 percent of the offices" (Pachon 1987, xvi).
  11. See, for example, Rose (1990), Pardo (1990), Carrillo (1986), and Castillo-Speed (1990).
  12. The bibliographic essay by Lillian Castillo-Speed (1990), "Chicana Studies: A Selected List of Materials since 1980" includes only about ten explicitly political references out of several hundred. Much of the work on Chicana women and politics focuses on organizing in the makeup and cannery factories, situations less pertinent to Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Central American women in the Northeast. In addition, a search of major computer data bases confirms my observation that the vast majority of literature on Latina women concentrates on women in their reproductive, social, and labor market roles.
  13. See, for example, Hardy-Fanta (1991, 1993).
  14. Pardo discovered a similar process when she examined the political organizing of Mexican American women in Los Angeles. She found that the Latina women mobilized Latino men "by giving them a position they could manage. The men may have held the title of 'president,' but they were not making day-to-day decisions about work, nor were they dictating the direction of the group. . . . *This should alert researchers against measuring power and influence by looking solely*

at who holds titles” (Pardo 1990, 3: emphasis added). The obscuring of Latina women’s role in politics by the exclusive focus on “designated” leaders may be similar to a process that occurs for black women. For example, Sack (1988), in her study of black women’s union organizing at Duke University Medical Center, “discovered that the equation of political leadership with public spokespersons ‘obscured an equally crucial aspect of leadership, that of *network centers*, who were almost all black women.’ The women were at the center of family-like networks formed around everyday relationships among friends, neighbors and colleagues. They drew upon organizing skills learned at home. . . . They stood at the center of their community and on-the-job networks, tapping and directing the groups’ collective energies while remaining responsible to them” (Sack 1988; quoted in Ferguson 1989, 13).

15. See Barber (1984) and Pateman (1970, 1989), and Ackelsberg (1991) for a critique of liberal democratic theory and a discussion of the key elements of participatory democracy. Barber provides prescriptions for what he calls “strong democracy” but is weak in providing empirical examples. A problem with Pateman and Ackelsberg’s research is that they focus on participatory experiences in Yugoslavia and Spain, respectively.
16. See, for example, Margaret Rose (1990), “Traditional and Nontraditional Patterns of Female Activism in the United Farm Workers of America, 1962 to 1980,” Mary Pardo, “Mexican American Women Grassroots Community Activists: ‘Mothers of East Los Angeles.’”

See also the literature on women in politics in Latin America, for example, Aviel (1981), Letelier (1989), and Carrillo (1986). Carrillo reveals the role of Latina women as presidential candidates when she describes the candidacy of Doña Rosario Ibarra in the 1982 Mexican presidential election. Carrillo “evaluates the impact of her campaign on women’s political participation and organization within the Mexican Left” (Carrillo 1986, 96).

Mainstream literature analyzes the voting rates of Mexican women in comparison to white Americans (MacManus, Bullock and Grothe (1986), Shepro (1980), MacManus, Bullock and Grothe attribute recent voting increases in this population to an “increase in education, a decrease in discrimination, an increase in political consciousness and, more importantly for the present study, the fact that the *Latina women have a role as revolutionaries and the Latina mothers are agents for social change*” (1986, 606–11; emphasis added).

17. It is important to recognize that we’re talking about “ideal types”—that there are exceptions to the general pattern of women as the people who encourage participation. Nevertheless, nine of twenty influential Latina women I interviewed were not agency directors or appointed officials; only three of the eighteen influential men were not.
18. It should be noted that feminism encompasses a wide range of political ideologies. Liberal feminism strives to gain access to the jobs, elected offices, and power held by men in the American political system. Marxist feminism attempts to locate women’s oppression within capitalistic economic structures. Coole (1988) describes how radical feminists emphasize the “gendered rule of women by men” (see 260–261) and concludes that the so-called “feminine personality” is a social construction. There is a strain within feminist theory between ideologies that imply women and men are not inherently different versus those which attempt to “revalorize” women—to celebrate the differences. In the later perspective, women as

women can contribute to a more cooperative world order. The problem with this radical perspective is that it contains within it a "biology is destiny" component that has been used to disempower women in the socio/economic/political arena.

I do not ascribe to liberal feminist goals of access to male power circles and lean toward a view that women do have different perspectives on power and political relationships. Therefore, when I speak of feminist theorists I am referring not to liberal women seeking equality with men in a male-defined political world, but rather to the more radical perspective. The issue of the sources of gender differences (i.e., biology or social construction) and the theoretical problems implicit in this discussion will be left to others to unravel.

19. For a discussion of the debate about the social construction of gender differences and a caution against seeing male and female visions of politics in oppositional terms see Dietz (1989).
20. See Warren and Bourque (1985). The way political silence is orchestrated in formal organizations is not only discussed by feminist theorists. Lukes (1974) and Bachrach and Baratz (1962) detail the subtle ways people's awareness of their own needs and interests gets shaped. People may have grievances and needs that are unarticulated, covert or latent, and the power structure may work to suppress these grievance and needs. See, also, Arnstein (1969).

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## ***The Implementation of Public Policies in Latino Communities: A Theoretical Framework***

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### **Introduction**

Policy implementation research examines the process by which public policies, like federal acts, laws, court decisions or executive orders are carried out. Policy implementation research challenges policy analysts to consider theoretical variables such as organizational perspectives, administrative attitudes, policy formulations and underlying causal theories.

Very little research has been conducted on the implementation of public policies in Latino communities. That is, most theoretical research examines target populations who read and speak English or who have access to more formal channels of information. The theory also lacks any research on the implementation of policies for undocumented immigrants. In short, theoretical policy implementation has not adequately explored multicultural and multiethnic settings characterized by diverse Latino populations. Targeting Latinos for implementation schemes is important for implementation success, especially in large cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago and New York where ethnic enclaves flourish.

Proof of the importance of targeting groups within Latino communities took place in 1986 when policy makers implemented the Legalization Provision (hereafter referred to as "Legalization") of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). Legalization granted legalized status to immigrants who had met the following two conditions: (1) they had entered the United States illegally,

prior to January 1, 1982 and could prove continuous residence in the U.S., or (2) if they were non-citizen farm workers and could prove previous work experience in the country.

IRCA's success depended on policy makers at the federal, state and local levels targeting immigrants who were generally apprehensive about dealing with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) or other formal authorities. In this effort, issues such as language, income and citizenship status all had to be considered for the first time by policy analysts and policy formulators that proved challenging.

Interestingly, the majority of these implementing procedures were conducted by the INS, an agency traditionally feared by the undocumented immigrant population. Immigrant advocacy groups, knowing the history of INS relations with immigrants, thought this to be a problem. The INS is responsible for keeping undocumented immigrants out of the country as well as assisting them with attaining legalized status. The agency's law enforcement and legalization services are at odds. This duality of purpose subsequently hinders policy implementation (Bowsher, 1991; Morris, 1984).

Despite these challenges the implementation of Legalization proved to be one of the great successes of IRCA, especially in Los Angeles. Of the 3.1 million immigrants who applied for Legalization nationwide,<sup>1</sup> 1 million applicants were from the Los Angeles District;<sup>2</sup> of the 3.1 million, approximately half of these applicants were Latino, predominately from Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala.

In order to examine the theoretical variables associated with the implementation of public policies in Latino communities, this paper is divided into several sections. The first section reviews the significant research that led to the development of theoretical implementation. The second section provides a theoretical implementation case study in Los Angeles. The last section provides some theoretical recommendations based on this case study as well as the literature. Although we cannot generalize the findings from the Los Angeles case study, we do acquire insight into public policy implementation in Latino communities.

## **Methodology**

The research for this study relies on several types of analysis. First, policy evaluations conducted by governmental and non-governmental agencies—such as the Justice Department, the General Accounting Office, the INS, the Ford Foundation and the RAND Corporation—reviewed aspects of IRCA. These evaluations used extensive surveys and assessments of district-level service delivery which comprehensively describe the policy design, major actors and the implementation of IRCA at the federal, regional and local levels. Second, there are several surveys of immigrants who have dealt with the INS which were conducted during IRCA's implementation. For instance, "A Survey of Newly Legalized Persons in California" and "The 1988 Los Angeles County Latino Assessment Study," conducted by the Tomas Rivera Center, both provide an extensive understanding of immigrants who dealt with the INS during this

period. Third, I conducted in-depth interviews with the federal commissioner of INS, and regional, district and local INS directors, which are integral to understanding the implementation of immigration policy in Los Angeles. I also interviewed key players from immigrant advocacy groups in order to understand some of the issues raised by immigrants going through the process (see appendix, pg. 85). Finally, I conducted an extensive review of the public policy implementation literature, including academic journals, published books, dissertations and articles.

### **Theoretical Implementation: A Brief Review**

In the 1960s and the early 1970s, the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations enacted a series of Great Society programs to improve educational, economic and social conditions within the United States. These programs were often referred to as “fix-it” programs and were developed conceptually to rectify social ills within the country. In the early 1970s, researchers began to explore whether these Great Society programs were actually meeting their intended goals and whether there were identifiable reasons attributed to these successes or failures. During this period of program assessment, public policy implementation research began to flourish (Lauria, 1993).

Derthick (1972) examined the implementation of several Community Development Programs (CDPs) in the cities of Washington, D.C., San Antonio, Louisville, Clinton Township, New Bedford and San Francisco. The overall goal of these CDPs was to create housing for poor and underprivileged individuals. Derthick found that every one of these programs failed. She attributed these failures to the influence that local policy actors have on the implementation process. That is, local policy actors must be as committed as federal policy actors to implement the policy’s intended goals. Other factors also mentioned include the lack of support for the poor, difficulty in managing and organizing large objectives and the amount of discretionary power policy actors possess.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) examined the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in Oakland, California, and its attempt to provide employment opportunities for minorities. They found that in order for implementation to be successful policy makers should consider several factors: avoiding implementation schemes that require a multiplicity of organizations and actors; considering implementation as part of the policy making process, and not assigning program initiation to governmental amateurs or, as they call them, “fly by night administrators.”

These researchers also provided the first quantitative attempt at assessing implementation, finding that the number of clearance points has much to do with implementation success. In short, the simpler the implementation scheme, or in this case the less decisions made by the EDA, the more likely implementation will be successful. They concluded, like Derthick, that local policy actors do not have the same commitment or incentives as federal policy actors to implement a policy.

Building on the work of previous researchers like Derthick and Pressman and Wildavsky, Van Horn (1977), provided three implementation case studies

by which to examine implementation schemes: the General Revenue Sharing (GRS), the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) and the Community Development Block Grant (GDBG). He found that implementation success is directly related to the commitment of local policy players. Much like the findings of Pressman and Wildavsky, he also asserted that implementation can be more successful if objectives are clear for policy actors to carry out.

Van Horn found that clear policy objectives and mandates have much to do with implementation effectiveness, but clarity is difficult to attain. He suggests that the complexity of objectives can be attributed to the political nature by which policies are enacted and formulated; that is, policy formulation centers around political compromises diluting initial policy objectives. Van Horn recommended that the policy implementation process could be made simpler if variables such as policy standards, resources, local policy environment, national policy environment and program performance are considered initially during policy formulation.

Maintaining that there still is not a definitive method to studying implementation, William (1982) contended that implementation research is based on a variety of approaches such as those found in psychology, anthropology, economics and political science. He noted that this research usually consists of case studies that include detailed investigations rather than disciplinary concerns.

Perhaps one of the most interesting suggestions is his backward mapping approach. Simply stated, this approach to implementation conceptualizes how a policy actor might interpret implementation. With this innovative approach to understanding implementation, the analyst formulates anticipated steps for achieving policy objectives. Therefore, final implementation decisions are considered by policy formulators.

Finding that there still was a gap in the literature, Mazmanian and Sabatier subsequently developed the first comprehensive approach to assessing implementation (1984). These researchers found that by considering issues such as the "tractability of the problem, ability of the statute to structure implementation and non-statutory variables affecting implementation" a more systematic approach to assessing implementation would form. By having a consensus within the discipline, the researchers felt that other theorists could compare and contrast their findings which would result in a further exploration of implementation research. Their theoretical approach initiated a series of implementation studies.

Building on their previous research, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1984) developed their "implementation framework" comprised of a series of questions that examine variables associated with implementation schemes such as technical difficulties, target group diversity, the target group as a percentage of the population and extent of behavioral change required. Interestingly, the authors contend that the impact of implementation success or failure can take several years. This gives analysts and legislators sufficient time to rectify implementation problems and time to bring about important "behavioral or systemic changes." They also believe that long periods of time allow legislators a certain amount of experience with a program and the opportunity to decide if the program's objectives are worthy of pursuing.

Finding that implementation schemes cannot be the same for all groups, particularly ethnic minorities, Bullock and Lamb (1983) compared the implementation of desegregation programs in African-American and Latino communities. For example, they found that language preference should be considered when formulating policies and implementation schemes for Latinos. They also maintained that Latinos are more dispersed and varied across the country than African-Americans; consequently, the researchers contend that it is more difficult to get federal policies targeted to Latinos.

In a review of the literature, Goggin and Bowman (1987) synthesized the chronological development of implementation research. They maintained that first generation implementation research includes detailed accounts of how single authority decisions are carried out either at a single location or multiple sites. Theorists in this category include the work of Derthick, Pressman and Wildavsky. Second generation implementation research, including Mazmanian and Sabatier, advances the development of analytical frameworks that guide research. Goggin and Bowman maintain that the time has come for a new generation of implementation researchers. They recommend that third generation researchers should be more scientific and rigorous, and explain why implementation behavior varies over time, policies and units of government. Finally, the authors contend that in order for implementation studies to be comprehensive, the policy must be viewed over time "to capture the effects of modification and redesign from feedback and policy learning."

Messages that introduce public policies to target populations, like minorities, influence the way groups interact with their government, accept the policy, take advantage of its resources, and interact with their government in the future (Schneider and Ingram, 1992). Implementation can be more effective if words are carefully selected when promulgating policy objectives to target populations. Schneider and Ingram also maintain that the way a policy is "announced or advertised" to target groups may also have a major impact on the success or failure of a policy. They go on to say that policies often fail to serve their democratic roles because they do not elicit the kinds of orientation and participation patterns that are needed. The issue of how a policy is presented to target populations is an important consideration of implementation schemes.

Finally, P. May (1993) proposes that as policy mandates become more complex it is crucial that strong signals for success be sent down to policy actors. Good policy design can form these strong signals that set the expectations about an agency's actions and communicate desired implementation styles. In this case study, May finds that effective use of implementation variables rather than the agency having to change its overall organizational style made for effective implementation.

## Overview

The field of policy implementation conceptually evolved as follows. First, theorists contended that there are certain causal reasons attributed to implementation failures, such as the lack of commitment by local policy players and

complex policy objectives. Secondly, sophisticated frameworks or implementation checklists that assist analysts in predicting anticipated consequences of implementation flourished throughout the discipline. Today, the discipline is still evolving; there is still not a definitive consensus as to how to assess implementation schemes.

Furthermore, implementation research is based on a variety of approaches from a variety of disciplines. Case studies pervade implementation studies, however, theorists caution that the findings of one case study cannot be applied to implementation issues uniformly.

For purposes of generalization, several theoretical findings seem consistent throughout this brief review. Implementation success is related to the clarity of policy objectives. The influence and discretion that local policy actors have on the implementation process should be carefully considered by policy formulators. Implementation schemes have failed because policy makers relied on the premise that policy actors have the same commitment to policy objectives as federal or upper-level policy actors. Moreover, by considering unanticipated consequences of policy implementation, researchers can improve the implementation process. Implementation schemes should be based on realistic expectations, considering that results can take years to surface.

### **The Implementation of the Legalization Provision: A Case Study in Los Angeles**

The Legalization provision established a procedure for granting temporary resident alien status (TRA) to immigrants who have entered the U.S. illegally prior to January 1, 1982, and who have lived continuously in the country since then. This provision also legalized the status of non-citizen farm workers, if they could prove previous work experience in agriculture in the country. Immigrants with TRA status can have their status adjusted to permanent resident alien status (PRA) after 18 months if immigrants demonstrated a minimal understanding of English, U.S. History and government, or can take classes on these subjects. Immigrants have a 12 month period to apply for Legalization (Montweiler, 1986). Focusing on some of the theoretical variables examined in the literature review, the following case study examines their application in Los Angeles.

#### **Clear Objectives**

INS representatives and immigrant advocates expressed that the overall objective behind Legalization was clear. According to the respondents, Legalization had a long formulation period. It was created after approximately ten years of planning. Conceptions of IRCA or the major premises behind the provisions were developed prior to the Carter Administration in the 1970s. Policy players, like the INS and Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), were able to prepare for the implementation of these provisions



long before passage. These preparations included disseminating information on the issues to the agency and interest groups, holding workshops, and updating policy actors on the legislative progress of the Act.

Key players were also part of the planning process. For example, Alan Nelson, the Federal Commissioner of INS during IRCA, maintained that he as well as other agency representatives sat in on key meetings, task forces and sessions when designing these provisions. This line of communication between policy writers and the INS was an important dimension for the agency when understanding overall objectives; many of the INS representatives acknowledged this procedure during the interviews.

Alan Nelson went on to say that the long gestation period was characterized as, "an efficient exercise in bipartisan politics where a lot of the bugs were worked out before enactment." For example, he praised the Hispanic Congressional Caucus, characterizing their debate with INS as a thoughtful political process where both sides could articulate their needs.

MALDEF President, Antonia Hernandez, made another interesting observation regarding the objectives behind the provisions of IRCA. She maintained that when examining employer sanctions and the Legalization provision, it would seem that employer sanctions was the enforcement provision, and that Legalization was the service provision. However, Hernandez believed that Legalization was another enforcement policy because "it was a way of getting a large group of immigrants under legalized, policing scrutiny." She explained that in the long run the sanctions program was going to be an expensive policy to implement because it was on-going; whereas Legalization was a "one shot, only chance." By legalizing many immigrants, it was a good way of reducing the costs of enforcing sanctions in the long run. "These are underlying contradictions and these lead to an agency that is schizophrenic." Hernandez explained that because of these enforcement benefits derived from Legalization, immigrant advocacy groups, like MALDEF, possessed considerable lobbying power when formulating the legalization provision.

### Targeting

It was extremely difficult to target groups for implementation. Fear of deportation is just one of the many reasons why undocumented immigrants do not get counted in census-related estimates. Consequently, it is difficult to prepare adequately when developing programs.

During the implementation of IRCA, the respondents all maintained that they found it very challenging to prepare for the number of undocumented immigrants wishing to apply for Legalization. For example, the 1980 census estimated that 1,000,000 of the nation's undocumented population lived in the Los Angeles area, and that 65 percent of this population was eligible for legalization. The INS estimated that there was approximately 576,000 to 1,248,000 immigrants that would be eligible for legalization. And immigrant advocacy groups felt that there were over 2,000,000 undocumented immigrants who were eligible for legalization.

Today, it is clear whom the INS was targeting. Assessments of those individuals who eventually applied for legalization are as follows: 92 percent of all legalization applicants in Los Angeles were Latino, of which 78 percent were from Mexico. The "typical individual" who applied was male, 18–24 years old, had lived in the U.S. for approximately 5 years, and had 4–6 years of education.

The INS also found it difficult to estimate the different types of ethnic groups that would request legalization assistance. For example, the INS was criticized by Asian-Pacific leaders for not adequately soliciting Asian-Pacific applicants; they claimed that too much attention was placed on Latino immigrants (Baker-Gonzalez, 1990). In Los Angeles, it was estimated that there were 120,000 to 150,000 Asian-Pacifics of whom 36,000 to 75,000 would have been eligible for legalization (Gonzalez-Baker, 1990).

The INS maintained that unlike the Latino community, the Asian-Pacific community was more widespread throughout Los Angeles and the community did not share the same language bond of Latinos. For example, there are approximately 15 Asian-Pacific countries represented in Los Angeles; however, there was not one major radio, television or religious community organization.

### **Commitment**

In terms of commitment, all of the respondents felt that Legalization was to be given first priority. Respondents repeatedly stated that INS's motivation and job morale was incredibly high during the implementation of Legalization. The INS representatives felt that overall legalization was an opportunity to provide a benefit for the immigrant community. Anita Maker, for example, head Legalization officer in Los Angeles, expressed that "these immigrants could really benefit from this program, and it was a chance to change the image of the agency." Respondents contended that there has not been that same type of interest or enthusiasm in promoting other immigration policies.

The INS respondents further expressed that the tangible directives indicative of Legalization resulted in a stronger commitment on the part of policy players to meet the intended goals. That is, Legalization was a "one shot, only chance" for a large group of undocumented immigrants to become legalized; policy players were aware of this.

The public appeal that characterized Legalization was another important theoretical variable, particularly to respondents on the service side of the agency. Respondents recalled the extensive attention they received by the public and media during this period, expressing that the INS had never experienced so much outside support for agency activities. Respondents maintained that job morale during the implementation of Legalization was "very high." Respondents also contended that the public support resulted in the INS being more committed to meeting policy objectives.

The Western Regional Commissioner of the INS, Hal Ezell, stated that since Legalization was a new program, a new bureaucracy had to be created in Los Angeles. The INS opened 16 offices, hiring 20–25 people for each office.

According to respondents, the agency took advantage of its new staff and attempted to create an atmosphere of service orientation. For example, offices were set up in more immigrant-friendly locations, such as in shopping malls and neighborhood centers. The INS also changed its practice of "first come, first serve." This practice would require long lines and, at times, clients would never receive assistance. During this implementation phase, the INS mandated that INS centers only see immigrants on scheduled appointments in order to ensure better service.

## Messages

The director felt that one of the most important objectives of Legalization was to establish a good rapport with the Spanish-speaking media. The INS's outreach approach included representatives making appearances on local television and radio. The director recalled one occasion when a popular Spanish newscaster interviewed him, inquiring about the benefits of Legalization. The newscaster herself was not a legalized immigrant. She returned with her own questions regarding Legalization the next day. By assisting her and other Spanish celebrities, the INS was establishing a positive image within the immigrant community. Interestingly, the INS district and regional directors, as well as a popular Spanish radio disc jockey, El Tigre, began a massive public relations campaign on television, radio and at community events; the group was named "El Trio Amnestio." Elizabeth Rolph from the RAND Corporation commented:

The local effort concentrated on ethnic media, the distribution of informational pamphlets and mailers in nine languages (Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Samoan, Tai, and Tongan) informational meetings with community groups, and the convening of 17 conferences in the region to inform groups who might encourage the eligible population to apply. . . . For a period of time, 25 to 30 percent of all district staff were allocated to public relations appearances including such occasions as soccer matches, kite flying contests, masses and church programs, legalization fairs, and medical examination days. . . . There was also the Thursday Night Live program and extensive Spanish language radio programs conducted by the district director (Rolph, 1990).

Immigrant advocacy groups were also fearful that the image of the agency would diminish the pool of potential legalization applicants. Angelo Ancheta, director of the Coalition of Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles, (CHIRLA), complimented the INS during this phase. He believed, however, that recent sting and deportation operations conducted by the enforcement side of the agency had tarnished these positive images established during IRCA.

## Communication

Because the majority of INS' initial implementation activities occurred in the field, it was important that upper management within the INS be in touch with field concerns and events (GAO, 1991). The issue of communication becomes another important variable for this case study. Most of the respondents expressed that during initial implementation, communication between the federal, regional and district directors was an important dimension. Since the Los

Angeles district was the largest within the country, the federal and regional commissioners were particularly interested in its success. The federal, regional and district directors discussed issues several times per week; this allowed updated input on street level delivery service, awareness of unplanned consequences of implementation and alteration of procedures when necessary. Policy managers expressed that the initial implementation phase was somewhat chaotic, particularly for the service side. This communication process allowed for timely input and much needed flexibility during implementation.

### **Discretion**

The theoretical variable of discretion examined in this case study was defined as “being able to think on your feet,” or “the ability to make decisions without supervisor input.”<sup>3</sup> When Legalization was implemented, part of its success was directly related to the ability of INS representatives to make quick decisions without central support. If there was any doubt about an application, the INS representative in the Western region was told “to hold a generous and liberal view.”

### **Discussion of General Findings**

The findings of this case study imply that given the right theoretical variables, the INS can be effective at implementing service-type policies. These findings are important because the INS has clearly been distinguished more for its enforcement-directive than its service-directive. The findings of this case study provide recommendations that policy analysts may apply to implementation scenarios in Latino communities.

Implementation schemes can be much simpler if policy actors can rely on the reputation of implementing agencies. Policy analysts should consider the reputation of an agency, and what kind of messages and signals are communicated within Latino communities.

When policy actors are delegated the task of implementing policies in Latino communities, the agency should clearly articulate objectives for policy players. Agency guidelines should include tangible directives, such as “who is being targeted” and “specified timelines” for implementation. The Legalization experience illustrates that policy actors’ awareness of time settings and tangible directives generated significant commitment on the part of policy actors to meet desired objectives, resulting in implementation success.

Policy actors must fit implementation schemes to the unique needs of communities. For instance, policy actors should consider local mediating structures such as ethnic enclaves, religious organizations, language and media—all particularly important in Latino communities. The agency should also offer services at sites in community settings in addition to formal offices.

Discretionary decisions and input rather than standardized organizational guidelines should characterize implementation scenarios in Latino communities. Standardized procedures often impede the effectiveness of implementing actors by not allowing them to address the varied needs and circumstances of

various Latino groups, such as immigrants or non-immigrants. Implementing actors should also be able to make quick decisions on applications without supervisor feedback.

As evidenced by this case study, during the initial implementation phase unplanned consequences and alteration of procedures surfaced. This suggests that a communication process between the federal, regional and district policy actors, which allows for flexible and updated input on street level delivery service, needs to be supported.

This scenario also suggests that public support is an essential component for fostering agency commitment to policy objectives. Resources allocated for public relations campaigns will lead to greater public support and facilitate agency commitment. IRCA demonstrated that implementation is more difficult in hostile environments.

IRCA challenged the INS to set itself up as a service agency. However, as a result of recent sting and deportation operations on the enforcement side, the organizational gains such as outreach and public relations on the service side have diminished. Popular opinion regarding immigration clearly favors the enactment of more enforcement type procedures, such as stronger border patrol and stricter penalties towards undocumented immigration.

To date, implementation research has focused primarily on environmental, regulatory, social and civil rights policies. These studies have contributed immensely to the development of the discipline. Though progress in the field has been made and continues to evolve, the IRCA case-study demonstrates that much research into the implementation of policies affecting Latinos is still needed.

### **Interview Respondents and Their Affiliations**

*Alan Nelson*, from 1982 to 1989, was Federal Commissioner of INS; his responsibilities included translating policy and organizational objectives for the INS nationwide. He oversaw the four regional commissioners; he also played a key role developing IRCA. Currently, he is a consultant for The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) a lobbying agency for American rights.

*Hal Ezell*, from 1985 to 1988, was Western Regional Commissioner of INS; his responsibilities included translating policy and organizational objectives for the INS in the western region of the United States which included Arizona, Colorado, Alaska, Hawaii, New Mexico, Oregon, and California; he also oversaw the Los Angeles district. Currently, he is the Executive Director of the Ezell Associates, a firm that deals with foreign investment.

*Bill King*, from 1981 to 1988, was Western Regional Manager of IRCA; his responsibilities included translating IRCA's objectives into INS mandates, including both Legalization and Employer Sanctions. He is currently employed by the Ezell Associates.

*Ernest Gustafson*, from 1985 to 1990, was the Los Angeles District Director of INS; his responsibilities included managing the Los Angeles area which was

the largest district to implement IRCA within the United States. Currently, he is the Director of the United Education Institute, an immigrant advocacy agency in Huntington Park, California.

*Donald Looney* is the INS's Deputy District Director of Los Angeles. During IRCA, he was the Assistant Regional Commissioner in charge of deportation and apprehension.

*Dennis Perry* is an INS Asylum Officer responsible for asylum and refugee applicants.

*Anita Maker* is the Chief Legalization Officer of the Los Angeles INS Office. She had extensive experience implementing IRCA, particularly Legalization.

*John Brechtal*, during the implementation of IRCA, was the Assistant Regional Commissioner under Hal Ezell. He was in charge of investigations and dealt solely with implementing Employer Sanctions during the initial phase of IRCA. He is currently the Assistant Director of Investigations at the Los Angeles District.

*John Flynn* is an INS Investigator. His duties mainly deal with examining fraudulent documentation.

*Antonia Hernandez* is currently the President of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF). She has worked with immigration policy for approximately twenty years. She has been on several major select commissions on immigration, and was the Director of MALDEF in Washington, D.C. during IRCA.

*Susan Alva* is an attorney for the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles (CHIRLA). Before IRCA, she had extensive experience with immigration law at the Public Counsel, a non-profit legal agency for the Los Angeles community.

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## Endnotes

1. For this research, "Legalization Implementation" refers to both Amnesty and Special Agricultural Workers (SAW) applicants.
2. Overall there were 1,622,517 applicants from the state of California. The remainder of Legalization applicants were from: Texas (445, 850); New York (171,083); Illinois (159,760); Florida (152,348); Arizona (82,649); New Jersey (45,439 ); Washington (37,539); New Mexico (28,085); Oregon (27,520); and Other (including U.S. territories and possessions) (259,058). Data taken from the INS Commissioner's Fact Book Summary of Recent Immigration Data, July 1992.
3. Interestingly, studies that examine social service delivery are somewhat split as to whether implementation decisions should be characterized by discretion during street level decisions.



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## ***Family Employment Status and Labor Market Outcomes for Teens and Young Adults***

**Janis Barry Figueroa, Ph.D.**

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### **Introduction**

Does living with family members who are not in the labor force have an impact on the chances for employment of teens and young adults? Findings show that unemployed youths rely most frequently on family and friends to generate job contacts or offers. This method of job search is the most widely used among young people because it is the most productive (Holzer, 1988). However, what happens to the job prospects of youths when a significant number of their immediate relatives and friends are out of the labor force entirely? Does a young Puerto Rican or Black worker already facing entry barriers to the labor market become doubly disadvantaged if other household members are out of work and presumably disconnected from conventional job networks?

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***Does a young Puerto Rican or black worker already facing entry barriers to the labor market become doubly disadvantaged if other household members are out of work and presumably disconnected from conventional job networks?***

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This paper will test the hypothesis that among Puerto Rican, non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic White youths in New York City, residing with an employed parent, sibling, or other family member increases their probability of getting a job. To better understand the causal links between the employment status of the youth and his/her family background characteristics, the employment status of all family members and specifically, the occupation of the employed

parent will be investigated. Research suggests that employment networks for urban youths in low-income households are curtailed by their physical isolation from employment concentrations in increasingly decentralized metropolitan areas (Holzer, Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1994). Correspondingly, evidence on social access to employment through informal contacts reveals that minority youths are at a disadvantage because the lower number of employed family members at home affects the quality of information that is provided (O'Regan and Quigley, 1993). A combination of low-skill and educational attainment on the supply-side and a changing industrial structure providing fewer job opportunities for young workers on the demand-side are also implicated in the high rate of minority-youth joblessness (Cain and Finnie, 1990).

Nationally, among all non-Hispanic and Hispanic groups, the incidence of joblessness among Puerto Ricans in 1991–1992 was the highest with Puerto Ricans 16 to 24 years of age experiencing a 20.2 percent rate of unemployment (U.S. Department of Labor, 1992). The first section of this paper reviews the literature on the labor-market experience of Puerto Rican teens and young adults and highlights information on their New York City employment and occupational profile. The second section describes the methodological framework and the data used to estimate the independent roles played by family and by personal and labor-market characteristics in determining labor-force participation for young Puerto Ricans, non-Hispanic Blacks and non-Hispanic Whites. The last section summarizes the empirical results for male and female teens (ages 16 to 19) and young adults (ages 20 to 24).

### **Focus on Puerto Rican Teens and Young Adults**

Census data for 1980 and 1990 reveal that Puerto Ricans had the highest incidence of poverty of any minority or ethnic group in the United States and Puerto Rican youths were more likely than other Hispanic youths to be living in families with incomes below the poverty line. In 1980, 44% of the Puerto Rican population living on the mainland resided in the New York City metropolitan area. Puerto Ricans in this area were residentially segregated and spatially isolated, which diminished their likelihood of gaining access to spatially-determined resources like education and employment (Bean and Tienda, 1987). Studies show that the labor-market problems of Puerto Rican youths are particularly severe, yet research on this group has been limited due to the unavailability of data sources that could generate samples large enough for reliable inference (Santos, 1985; Fernandez, 1985).

In New York City, the employment problems of young Puerto Ricans were exacerbated by persistently high unemployment and non-participation rates within the Puerto Rican community as a whole during the 1970s. The number of Puerto Rican families with no one employed increased dramatically between 1970 and 1980 and remained high throughout the 1980s. New York State labor-force participation rates for Puerto Ricans were dramatically lower and unemployment significantly higher in 1980 than rates for Puerto Ricans living in either California or Florida where Hispanics overall fared much better. DeFreitas (1991: 144) argues that the data from this period clearly shows that Puerto Rican

workers in New York were disproportionately affected by the decline in entry-level jobs and the polarization of the job structure in New York City.

Research on the determinants of employment using family-background variables as controls indicates that young people from disadvantaged homes are more likely to experience joblessness (Freeman, 1986; Payne, 1987). This is particularly pertinent for young Puerto Ricans living in New York City because of the high rates of poverty and unemployment that have prevailed in their communities during the last 20 years. It is likely that, lacking the contacts that employed relatives could provide, joblessness and unemployment increased among Puerto Rican youths, linking younger and older generations in a common experience of labor-market discouragement and increasing poverty.

A number of possible scenarios suggest themselves, given the employment profiles of Puerto Ricans who lived in New York City during the last two decades and the proven significance of certain background variables on youth labor-market activity. High rates of unmarried motherhood contributed to the low rates of employment found among Puerto Rican women ages 16 to 24, and low employment rates subsequently increased their chances of poverty. The rise in the number of Puerto Rican youths who resided in one-parent (largely female-headed) households in which the mother did not work, or who lived in households in which no one held a job, diminished the effectiveness of community job networks. The overrepresentation of Puerto Rican adults in declining industrial sectors of the New York City economy placed them at a disadvantage in generating employment contacts for the young. The residential segregation of Puerto Ricans in neighborhoods where poverty was concentrated further diminished Puerto Rican youth employment beyond the rate that demand forces would warrant (O'Regan, 1993).

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DeFreitas (1991: 141) reported that the largest white-Hispanic difference in access to private transportation in 1980 was found in New York City, specifically, in Bronx county, which has the largest concentration of Puerto Ricans, fully 73 percent of Hispanic residents reported they had no access to personal transportation. This indicates that even if jobs were available outside of the city, Puerto Rican workers were stymied in their ability to access them. He also noted that nearly one in three Puerto Rican households in New York State did not have telephone service in 1980, which would certainly impede the ability to make job connections. Ihlanfeldt (1992) found that differential access to jobs (measured in mean commuting time) between whites and Puerto Ricans living in New York City explained roughly 30 percent of the existing employment-rate gap. The mismatch between the residential location of Puerto Rican youths in New York City and the spatial availability of jobs in the region further weakened the job networks within a youth's family and the community at large.

In New York City, the dropout rate for Hispanics in 1992 was 21.3 percent, compared to 16.4 percent for Blacks and 11.9 percent for Whites (New York City Board of Education, 1994). Persistently high dropout rates complicate the already difficult school-to-work transition for Puerto Rican youths. The labor-force participation rate in 1980 for Hispanic teenagers in New York City was comparatively lowest at 25.9 percent and their employment/population ratio was the smallest at 19.4 percent (DeFreitas, 1991: 143). A decline of 38 percent in the number of entry-level jobs in New York City between 1970 and 1980, along with declining school enrollments, graduation, early marriage and/or pregnancy and increased alternatives in the underground economy have all contributed to the employment problems of young Puerto Rican, who live in this area (NCLR, 1994).

### **Research Method and Data to be Used**

The Five Percent 1980 Census Public Use Sample for New York City has been used to create a data set containing information on the determinants of employment for men and women, ages 16 to 19 and 20 to 24, who lived in households where they were the children of the household head. The 1980 Census was chosen to take advantage of the large number of published studies that have used this data to analyze Puerto Rican employment conditions (Melendez, Rodriguez and Barry Figueroa, 1991). The estimations are an indirect test for the existence and importance of family job connections in increasing a youth's employment chances. Three populations were used for the empirical tests: Puerto Ricans, non-Hispanic Blacks and non-Hispanic Whites. The employment regressions for men and women were estimated separately by race/ethnicity and age. The investigation was restricted to out-of-school teenagers and young adults, for whom the issue of finding a full-time job is presumed to be most pressing. Data were taken directly from the youth's personal record. Replicating in part the methodology of Rees and Grey (1982), I also took information from the relevant record on the parent (householder), siblings (ages 16 to 34) and other related household members (ages 16 to 34) and merged it with information on the youth's record. In addition to the records of the youth and the parent, up to four additional personal records from the household were read, ensuring that maximum use was made of the available information on siblings and other relatives. Information on the employment status of the parent (e.g., active or inactive), the parent's occupational location, the sex, age and employment status of the young person's siblings, as well as the employment and gender status of other relatives in the household were included in the analysis to detect intra-family interactions. Two dependent variables were analyzed: (1) a variable indicating labor-force participation in the survey week, and (2) estimated total hours worked by the young person in the previous year (the product of weeks worked per year and hours worked per week in 1979). Findings from both models were similar. Only the significant results from the participation decision are reported in Tables 1 and 2. Teens and young adults who were at work or unemployed were considered to be active members of the labor force.

The explanatory variables can be divided into three categories: family background characteristics, the youth's human-capital characteristics, and local labor-market characteristics. Family background factors include whether the youth was residing in a female-headed household, the level of exogenous income flowing into the household, an indicator of the sex and self-employment status of the householder and whether the family was living below the poverty line. The employment status and occupation of the parent (household head), the employment status of adult male and female relatives and the employment status of younger and older brothers and sisters were factors included in the empirical tests.<sup>1</sup>

In the large set of variables measuring the employment status of siblings between the ages of 16 and 34, there are four subsets, for older brother, younger brother, older sister and younger sister. Following the procedure explained in Rees and Grey's study (1982: 462) for each of these subsets, two variables were created to capture the employment status of the sibling (e.g., "younger sister employed" and "younger sister not employed"). By definition the base or omitted variable is "no younger sister living at home." If the young person to whom the independent variables pertain has more than one sibling between the ages of 16 and 34 living at home, then both dummies [sic] in the above younger-sister subset would take the value 1.<sup>2</sup>

Human-capital characteristics of the youths used in the estimations were: completed years of education, country of birth, English language proficiency and health disability status. Childbearing status was entered as a control in the analysis for young women because of its conventional significance in determining their employment status. Differences in labor-market demand, due to contrasting levels of economic activity across the boroughs of New York City, were captured by the county-specific civilian unemployment rates (i.e., Manhattan, the Bronx) for each population (i.e., the variation in the Puerto Rican civilian unemployment rate across the boroughs was used in the regression analysis for Puerto Ricans). Appendix A lists and defines the variables used in the analyses for all samples.

### **Labor Force Participation Results for Men**

The data show that Puerto Rican male teens had significantly lower labor force participation rates (at 43 percent relative to Black and White teens (53 percent and 68 percent respectively). Perhaps most striking was the percentage of Puerto Rican teens who lived in poor households and in families where the householder (parent) was not in the labor force. Working parents of Puerto Rican teens were more likely to hold blue-collar jobs, especially those categorized as lower blue-collar. Those Black and Puerto Rican teens who were employed tended to work fewer hours, averaging only 53 percent of the annual hours worked by white male teens. Education was on average lower for Puerto Rican teens, and work disability and English language problems higher. Teenage Puerto Rican males appeared to be at a labor market disadvantage relative to white teens in particular, facing an average civilian unemployment rate

that was almost 1.5 percentage points higher than the rate of the white teen sample (see Appendix B).

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*Residence in a poor household lowers the probability of employment by 25.1 percent Conversely, residing with working parents who hold upper blue-collar jobs increases the probability of employment by 25.6 percent*

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Puerto Rican young adults (ages 20 to 24) also registered fewer years of completed education, higher rates of poor English proficiency and lower rates of labor-force participation than their Black and White counterparts. Only 65 percent of their parent/householders were in the work force, as compared to 70 percent and 85 percent of the parents from the Black and White young-adult samples. Puerto Rican young adult males were also more likely to reside in poor households where there were comparatively fewer numbers of employed family members.

Table 1 presents the coefficients from the probit model for labor-force participation for each of the three groups of young males. The probit model was the preferred functional form as the dependent variable is a binary variable expressed as a linear function of the independent variables. The probit factor in the first row of each table allows one to standardize the coefficients ("DY/DX") and obtain percentage-point estimates associated with a one-unit change in the independent variable.<sup>3</sup>

**Puerto Rican Males, Ages 16–19** Table 1 indicates that only two variables are significant in determining the probability of labor-force participation for these teens. Residence in a poor household lowers the probability of employment by 25.1 percent Conversely, residing with working parents who hold upper blue-collar jobs increases the probability of employment by 25.6 percent. This finding suggests the possibility that employed parents in the trades are able to identify job opportunities for their sons. Upper blue-collar jobs may be unionized and parental information on apprenticeship openings and connections to these jobs may prove crucial. Note that it is the occupational location of the parent and not the fact that the parent is employed per se that is significant here. Overall, the results for the Puerto Rican male youth sample are of interest because of the lack of significance of other family employment variables, as well as factors such as education and language proficiency that one would expect to affect the employment probabilities of these teens.

**Non-Hispanic Black Males, Ages 16–19** Relative to Puerto Rican teens, there is evidence of greater intra-family effects in the Black teen sample. In Table 1, Black teens had a 25.6 percent increased employment probability if their younger sister was employed, but saw a decrease in probability of 14.4% if their younger sister was not employed. The finding that the non-employment of a younger brother at home significantly increased participation probabilities by 12.3 percent is unexpected. Each year of additional education raised the probability of employment for these teens by 3.3 percent.

**Table 1. Coefficients of Probit Model for Labor Force Participation of Males, Ages 16–19 and Ages 20–24<sup>a</sup>**

*Dependent Variable = in the Labor force (Standard Errors in Parentheses)  
Estimation method: Maximum Likelihood*

|                                | <i>Puerto Rican</i> |                   | <i>Black</i>      |                   | <i>White</i>      |                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                | <i>16-19</i>        | <i>20-24</i>      | <i>16-19</i>      | <i>20-24</i>      | <i>16-19</i>      | <i>20-24</i>      |
| $f(X \setminus) +$<br>Variable | .3877               | .3622             | .3989             | .3386             | .3405             | .2068             |
| Constant                       | -.313<br>(.792)     | .705<br>(.702)    | -.864<br>(.700)   | .789<br>(.447)    | -.516<br>(.635)   | 1.31**<br>(.403)  |
| YEduc                          | -.015<br>(.033)     | .069**<br>(.027)  | .083*<br>(.037)   | .024<br>(.019)    | .103**<br>(.032)  | .037**<br>(.014)  |
| HHWorks                        | .011<br>(.208)      | .331*<br>(.169)   | .153<br>(.176)    | .102<br>(.121)    | -.067<br>(.172)   | .164<br>(.096)    |
| Poor                           | -.647**<br>(.188)   | -.732**<br>(.158) | -.176<br>(.165)   | -.585**<br>(.121) | -.619**<br>(.204) | -.845**<br>(.182) |
| YDisable                       | -.274<br>(.293)     | -.913**<br>(.200) | -.402<br>(.258)   | -.821**<br>(.146) | -.836**<br>(.300) | -1.08**<br>(.147) |
| UnempRt                        | .018<br>(.045)      | -.009<br>(.037)   | .010<br>(.026)    | -.002<br>(.018)   | -.011<br>(.020)   | -.035<br>(.012)   |
| UBCol                          | .662*<br>(.315)     | .139<br>(.257)    | -.281<br>(.245)   | -.152<br>(.178)   | .224<br>(.185)    | -.197<br>(.120)   |
| ServOcc                        | .161<br>(.232)      | -.181<br>(.182)   | -.120<br>(.173)   | .080<br>(.127)    | .043<br>(.173)    | -.246*<br>(.111)  |
| YoBro                          | .269<br>(.183)      | -.095<br>(.145)   | .309*<br>(.150)   | -.038<br>(.102)   | .001<br>(.168)    | -.026<br>(.107)   |
| OlBroEm                        | .115<br>(.644)      | .175<br>(.256)    | .570<br>(.543)    | -.065<br>(.179)   | -3.39<br>(48.3)   | .421**<br>(.161)  |
| OlBro                          | -.199<br>(.443)     | -.178<br>(.195)   | -.136<br>(.373)   | -.031<br>(.132)   | 3.73<br>(48.3)    | -.309*<br>(.134)  |
| YoSisEmp                       | -.240<br>(.473)     | .372<br>(.287)    | .643*<br>(.328)   | .154<br>(.230)    | .626*<br>(.294)   | -.085<br>(.157)   |
| OlSisEmp                       | -.290<br>(.384)     | .073<br>(.251)    | .200<br>(.263)    | .407**<br>(.169)  | 1.14**<br>(.258)  | .160<br>(.168)    |
| YoSis                          | .013<br>(.163)      | -.006<br>(.152)   | -.361**<br>(.144) | -.257**<br>(.099) | .077<br>(.162)    | .039<br>(.109)    |
| OlSis                          | -.087<br>(.280)     | -.242<br>(.187)   | -.071<br>(.176)   | -.131<br>(.115)   | -.544**<br>(.212) | -.110<br>(.147)   |
| MRelEmp                        | 4.56<br>(29.3)      | .246<br>(.770)    | -.379<br>(1.08)   | 1.28*<br>(.664)   | -.138..<br>(.795) | -4.03<br>(18.2)   |

<sup>a</sup>Variables included in estimation but not shown in table because of lack of significance include: UWCol, LWCol, YoBroEmp, MRelative, FRelative, FRelEmp, FHHead, MSelfEmp, YBirth, YEnglish, LnExogIn.

|                            |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| N =                        | 368   | 563   | 487   | 1106  | 663   | 2244  |
| Log likelihood             | 226.5 | 313.6 | 308.9 | 617.7 | 367.3 | 838.9 |
| Mean of Dependent Variable | .435  | .65   | .534  | .703  | .685  | .859  |

+Multiply coefficients by this factor to obtain slopes at variable means

Significance Level

\*\* < .01 \* < .05

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*Overall, the results for the Puerto Rican male youth sample are of interest because of the lack of significance of other family employment variables, as well as factors such as education and language proficiency that one would expect to affect the employment probabilities of these teens.*

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**Non-Hispanic White Males, Ages 16–19** Table 2 reveals that having a younger sister employed increased the probability of employment for this sample by 21.3 percent, while having an older sister employed increased work probabilities by 39.1 percent. However, having an older sister who was not employed decreased work probabilities by 18.5 percent. An additional year of education increased work probabilities by 3.5 percent. For those young men who cited work disabilities or who lived in poor households, work probabilities were diminished by 28.4 percent and 21 percent respectively. Particularly among the White male sample there is evidence of a direct relationship between the employment status of other family members and the probabilities of labor-market entry. This is indicative that the universe of job opportunities open to White male teens is much greater than that for Black and Puerto Rican teens. White teens and their families do not suffer from the racial/ethnic discrimination that limits employment opportunities and job contacts.

Whether the family interactions in the White and Black sample are suggestive of “a common work ethic” within the family, as was suggested by Rees and Grey (1982: 464) or of family job networks that aid and support young men entering the labor force cannot be easily determined. If the sibling, relative or parental job-location variables that were significant across the samples are capturing job networks, it is interesting to note that Black and White male teens benefit from contacts provided by their female relatives as well as information from their male relatives. Given the high degree of occupational segregation by gender, this is somewhat surprising. The parental employment variable used in this study does not distinguish the gender of the household head, but in a similar analysis O’Regan and Quigley (1993) found that the presence of a working father has a larger effect on youth employment probabilities than does the presence of a working mother, especially for male youths. The importance of a working household head may therefore be underestimated in the Puerto Rican and Black male samples because of the larger number of female-headed households.

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*This is indicative that the universe of job opportunities open to white male teens is much greater than that for Black and Puerto Rican teens. White teens and their families do not suffer from the racial/ethnic discrimination that limits employment opportunities and job contacts.*

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O’Regan and Quigley (1991) also found that working urban youths are more likely to be in an industry or location similar to that of a working parent. Job-matching models suggest that if the price of obtaining information about



**Table 2. Coefficients of Probit Model for Labor Force Participation of Females, Ages 16–19 and Ages 20–24a**

*Dependent Variable = in the Labor force (Standard Errors in Parentheses)  
Estimation method: Maximum Likelihood*

|                       | <i>Puerto Rican</i> |                   | <i>Black</i>      |                   | <i>White</i>      |                   |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                       | <i>16-19</i>        | <i>20-24</i>      | <i>16-19</i>      | <i>20-24</i>      | <i>16-19</i>      | <i>20-24</i>      |
| f (X/(0)+<br>Variable | .2655               | .3839             | .3605             | .3941             | .3118             | .1824             |
| Constant              | -.009<br>(.937)     | -2.15**<br>(.860) | -.568<br>(.706)   | -.429<br>(.483)   | -2.91**<br>(.796) | -.046<br>(.545)   |
| LnExogIn              | -.115**<br>(.045)   | -.072<br>(.044)   | -.011<br>(.042)   | -.055<br>(.031)   | -.002<br>(.044)   | -.087*<br>(.044)  |
| YEduc                 | .053<br>(.042)      | .116**<br>(.033)  | .041<br>(.032)    | .114**<br>(.020)  | .294**<br>(.045)  | .073**<br>(.018)  |
| Poor                  | -.629**<br>(.239)   | -.733**<br>(.190) | -.667**<br>(.181) | -.621**<br>(.126) | -.832**<br>(.242) | -1.30**<br>(.201) |
| YDisable              | -.667<br>(.437)     | -.936**<br>(.272) | -.135<br>(.309)   | -.717**<br>(.184) | -.957*<br>(.455)  | -1.49**<br>(.185) |
| UnempRt               | -.051<br>(.055)     | .080<br>(.048)    | -.033<br>(.029)   | -.024<br>(.018)   | -.056**<br>(.021) | -.036**<br>(.014) |
| YBirth                | .578**<br>(.213)    | .268<br>(.151)    | -.041<br>(.199)   | -.061<br>(.119)   | .264<br>(.201)    | .179<br>(.147)    |
| YoBroEmp .            | .877*<br>(.437)     | -.178<br>(.378)   | .791**<br>(.325)  | .392<br>(.228)    | .631*<br>(.276)   | .690**<br>(.213)  |
| YoBro                 | -.413<br>(.231)     | -.109<br>(.186)   | .161<br>(.157)    | -.101<br>(.107)   | -.259<br>(.164)   | -.295**<br>(.112) |
| OlBroEmp.             | .612<br>(.384)      | .088<br>(.273)    | .006<br>(.264)    | .156<br>(.164)    | .210<br>(.243)    | .487**<br>(.172)  |
| OlSisEmp              | -4.26<br>(55.2)     | .346<br>(.348)    | 1.55<br>(.985)    | .576**<br>(.217)  | .059<br>(.576)    | .471*<br>(.235)   |
| OlSis                 | .278<br>(.636)      | .075<br>(.246)    | -.782<br>(.695)   | -.081<br>(.143)   | .104<br>(.478)    | -.357<br>(.204)   |
| FemRel                | -3.53<br>(55.1)     | .751<br>(.554)    | -1.58*<br>(.813)  | .717<br>(.515)    | 3.30<br>(68.5)    | 2.97<br>(39.0)    |
| UBCol                 | -.085<br>(.354)     | .276<br>(.302)    | -.217<br>(.347)   | -.049<br>(.204)   | -.046<br>(.206)   | .275*<br>(.141)   |
| NoKids                | .590**<br>(.235)    | .878**<br>(.161)  | .273*<br>(.145)   | .671**<br>(.090)  | .894**<br>(.043)  | 1.36**<br>(.186)  |
| N=                    | 296                 | 430               | 486               | 982               | 678               | 1969              |

aVariables included in the estimation but not in the table because of lack of significance include: HHWorks, MSelfEmp, FHHead, YEnglish, UWCol, LWCol, ServOcc, OlBro, YoSis, YoSisEmp, FRelEmp, MRelative, MRelEmp,

Log likelihood 145.3 223.4 278.4 564.3 324.6 636.1  
Mean of Dependent Variable .28 .58 .35 .57 .726 .863

+Multiply coefficients by this factor to obtain slopes at variable means

Significance Level

\*\*< .01 \* < .05

the parent's job (through direct questioning) is lower than the price of obtaining information about other jobs (through more formal search methods), then we should expect children to be more likely to try their parent's jobs. In tests of association between the occupational location of the parent and that of the working Puerto Rican male teen, a significant, positive association was detected in lower white-collar, upper blue-collar and service occupations. Interestingly, there was no significant association found in the occupational location of black and white teens and their parents.

**Puerto Rican Males, Ages 20–24** Table 1 indicates that having a parent in the labor force increased the probability of participation by 12 percentage points for Puerto Rican young-adult males. However, none of the other variables reflecting family employment status were significant. Each additional year of education increased participation by 2.5 percent. Residence in a poverty-level household diminished job probabilities by 26.5 percent and a work disability decreased participation by 33 percent.

To summarize, an employed head of household had a positive effect on the employment chances of Puerto Rican young-adult males, while the employment status of other family members in the household seemed irrelevant to increased job access.

**Non-Hispanic Black Males, Ages 20–24** Indications of “family effects” are evident in Table 1 for Black young-adult males. Having an older sister who was employed increased job participation by 13.8 percent. Living with a male relative who was employed increased the probability of employment by a very large 43.4 percent, indicating that job connections may indeed play a role here. However, living with a younger sister who was not in the labor force decreased employment probabilities by 8.7 percent. Residence in a poverty household and having a work disability decreased the probability of working by 19.8 percent and 27.7 percent respectively.

**Non-Hispanic White Males, Ages 20–24** Table 1 shows that relative to those young adults who resided in households where the head was located in a lower blue-collar occupation, those whose parents worked in service occupations were 5.1 percent less likely to be in the labor force. In the annual hours results (not reported here), the parent's employment in this occupational category was also significant in lowering the youth's work hours. This suggests that parents in service jobs were less likely or able to use these networks to get their sons full-time jobs. Having an older brother employed increased participation probabilities by 8.7 percent, while having an older brother who was not in the labor force diminished these probabilities by 6.3 percent. Increased years of education had a positive effect on labor-force entry, while residence in a poor household or a work disability diminished employment prospects.

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*To summarize, an employed head of household had a positive effect on the employment chances of Puerto Rican young-adult males, while the employment status of other family members in the household seemed irrelevant to increased job access.*

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For Black young adults, older, employed sisters and male relatives had a significant employment effect, while for White young adults, it was the employment status of the older brother that was most important. Tests for independence in the occupational location of white householders and young adults revealed a significant positive association in each of the five occupational categories. The association was significant only in the case of lower White-collar jobs among the Black sample and in upper White-collar and service jobs among the Puerto Rican sample. Residence in a poverty-level household negatively affected job entry for all three groups, but the magnitude of this effect was much larger for Puerto Rican young adult males.

### Labor Force Participation Results for Women

There are major differences in the mean characteristics of the three groups of teenage women. Only 28 percent of Puerto Rican female teens surveyed were in the labor force as compared to 34 percent of Black and 72 percent of White teens. White teens were more likely to be childless (at 97 percent) than Puerto Rican and Black teens (76 percent and 72 percent respectively). Only 46 percent of the parents of Puerto Rican teens were active in the labor force, as compared to 63 percent of the Black parents and 83 percent of the White parents. Fully half of the Puerto Rican young women lived in households where income was below the poverty line, and the percentage of siblings and other family members not active in the labor force was consistently larger among Puerto Rican families. Puerto Rican teens averaged the lowest number of years of completed education (at 9.73 years) and, relative to the parents of Black and White teens, a higher percentage of all working Puerto Rican parents were located in blue-collar jobs.

Differences between the three female young-adult samples are notable. Puerto Rican women worked 52 percent of the number of annual hours of White women and 110 percent of the average number of hours of Black women. Young Puerto Rican and Black women were equally likely to be in the labor force (at 58 percent and 57 percent respectively) and education levels were similar, although both groups had lower education levels than White women. Young Puerto Rican women were once again more often located in poor households and households where the parent was not in the labor force. Puerto Rican women were more likely than Black women to be childless (75 percent versus 62 percent), but this ratio was still below the percentage of young white women (97 percent) who did not have children. Puerto Rican young adults consistently resided with fewer siblings who were active in the labor force when compared to the other samples (Appendix C).

**Puerto Rican Females, Ages 16–19** Table 2 presents the labor force-participation results for Puerto Rican female teens. Those teens with younger brothers who were employed exhibited a 23.2 percent increased probability of being in the labor force. Female teens who did not have children were 15.6 percent more likely to be working. Mainland-born teens had a 15.3 percent greater probability of working than did island-born teens. Poverty and disability had negative impacts on employment, as did increased levels of household income.

**Non-Hispanic Black Females, Ages 16–19** Table 2 shows that Black teens were more likely to have participated in the labor force if they lived with an employed younger brother (28.5 percent) and did not have children (9.8 percent). Living with an inactive [sic] female relative decreased employment probabilities by a large 57 percent, indirectly suggesting that labor force discouragement can run in families.

**Non-Hispanic White Females, Ages 16–19** Table 2 indicates that female teens living with employed younger brothers were 19.6 percent more likely to be active in the labor force. Those young adults without children had a 27.8 percent greater probability of holding a job, and each additional year of education raised probabilities by 9.1 percent. A one-unit increase in the county-level unemployment decreased the probability of being in the labor force by 1.7 percent for this sample.

The findings for female teens indirectly suggest that employed younger brothers are beneficial in helping to access jobs. Teens who are not parents are consistently more likely to be working. White teens alone are positively rewarded for increased years of education and are negatively affected by changing employment demand as measured by the county-level unemployment rate. Tests for association between the parent's and teen's occupation showed a significant dependence within the White teenage women's sample in upper white-collar, lower white-collar and lower blue-collar jobs. Within the black sample, associations were detected between teens and parents working in lower white-collar and lower blue-collar jobs. The only significant association found within the Puerto Rican sample occurred in lower white-collar occupations.

**Puerto Rican Females, Ages 20–24** Table 2 indicates that living in a poor household and having a work disability reduced employment probabilities by 28 percent and 36 percent respectively. An additional year of education increased work probabilities by 4.4 percent, and remaining childless increased the probability of working by 33.7 percent.

**Non-Hispanic Black Females, Ages 20–24** Table 2 indicates that living with an employed older sister increased work prospects by 22.7 percent. A one-year increase in completed education raised labor-force probability levels by 4.4 percent. Poverty, disability and motherhood all had the expected effect on the dependent variable.

**Non-Hispanic White Females, Ages 20–24** Table 2 reveals that the work decision of these women is significantly affected by the employment status of other family members. Having a parent located in an upper blue-collar occupation increased employment probabilities by 5 percent. Living with an employed younger brother increased probabilities by 12.5 percent, whereas living with a younger brother who was out of the labor force decreased employment probabilities by 5.3 percent. Living with an employed older brother increased participation by 8.8 percent. Residence with an employed older sister increased participation by 8.5 percent. A one-unit increase in the county-specific unemployment rate decreased the probabilities of employment by six-tenths of one percent. Other significant variables included exogenous income, poverty, disability status and education.

Overall, the female young-adult findings replicate the consistent pattern of strong family effects, among Whites in particular, but among Blacks as well. Residence in a poor household diminished employment prospects for Puerto Rican young-adult women to a greater degree than was true for Black and White young adults in similar circumstances. Remaining childless had a comparatively larger impact on increasing the job prospects of female Puerto Rican young adults.

### Summary

Despite major differences in the significance and strength of the family variables between groups, it is clear that teens and young adults are themselves more likely to work and will generally work longer hours if they reside with family members who are active in the labor force. Of particular interest is the finding that in instances where both the "relative in work force" and "relative not in work force" were significant in determining a youth's employment, the positive impact of having a working sibling or relative always outweighed the negative impact of living with a non-working brother, sister or other relative. If job contacts are indirectly being captured through the family variables, we do not know if siblings, for example, help get jobs for the youth in question, or if our findings capture the individual youth's ability to gain employment for his/her brother or sister. The latter effect may be what is captured by the consistent positive significance of an employed younger brother across the teen and young-adult samples. The results allow us to identify the association between the employment status of family members and the youth, but they do not indicate the direction of causality. The significance of only two parental variables in the Puerto Rican male samples and the sibling variable in the Puerto Rican female teen sample suggests that networks in these families are limited and contextually specific. On average, the small number of employed Puerto Rican family members will tend to limit the significance of any of the family variables. However, it is notable that family members who are not employed do not negatively affect the labor-market chances of Puerto Rican youths, as was the case in the black and white samples. Thus it appears that whether a Puerto Rican youth resides with an employed family member or with relatives who are not employed is of generally minor importance in determining his or her job prospects.

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*The diminished ability of Puerto Rican youths to use as job contacts parents and relatives who face their own employment problems forces them to rely more heavily on formal institutions such as employment agencies, schools and training programs.*

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The diminished ability of Puerto Rican youths to use as job contacts parents and relatives who face their own employment problems forces them to rely more heavily on formal institutions such as employment agencies, schools and training programs. Hernandez (1983) found that public employment agencies

were the preferred job-search method among unemployed young Puerto Rican men and women in 1975–76. Santos (1985) found that in 1978–79, Puerto Rican youths participated in government employment and training programs in proportions exceeding Blacks. However, he found that lower percentages were satisfied with the program and few believed that their involvement had significantly improved their job prospects. In the early 1980s, funding cuts in employment and training programs curtailed Puerto Rican participation significantly (National Puerto Rican Coalition, 1983). More recently, Hispanics have been underrepresented in programs that assist in training and placement (U.S. Department of Labor, 1992).

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*Greater access to word-of-mouth recruitment systems and continued emphasis on educational and cognitive-skills development can better prepare these young people to engage in effective labor market searches.*

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Of major concern are the labor-market entry problems of the out-of-school Puerto Rican youth population since early labor-market experiences will determine one's access to on-the-job training and improved future earnings. Garcia and Hurtado (1984), in a rare study in which Hispanic subgroups were identified, found that persistent joblessness over the course of the business cycle from 1973 to 1981 was more problematic for Puerto Rican youths than for other Hispanic and white youths. Farkus, et. al. (1988), in a study that did not distinguish Hispanic subgroups, found that in 1979 inner-city, out-of-school Hispanic young men and women had higher employment rates than inner-city blacks, but significantly lower rates than inner-city whites. Hispanic young women had much lower employment rates than Hispanic males, and the lowest wages among all male and female youths.

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*In the 1990s, high rates of joblessness and unemployment continue to be a shared experience among Puerto Rican men and women and their working-age children.*

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Labor-market studies of Hispanic youths are important, but they may provide a misleading picture of the economic situation of Puerto Ricans. Puerto Rican youths were at a greater disadvantage in the labor market than other Hispanics in the 1980s (Santos, 1985; Fernandez, 1985). Concentrated family poverty and ineffective information networks supported the social isolation of Puerto Rican teens and young adults. Therefore, programs that emphasize job connections, mentor groups and other informational aspects of employment can serve as a prescription for improving the employment status of New York City Puerto Rican youths.

Greater access to word-of-mouth recruitment systems and continued emphasis on educational and cognitive-skills development can better prepare these young people to engage in effective labor market searches. However, this

study shows that conventional productivity-related factors such as educational attainment and language proficiency are not major factors in determining Puerto Rican youths' employment. Variations in the Puerto Rican unemployment rates across the boroughs of New York also did not explain why some youths had jobs. Living in a poor household, however, played a significant role in determining job-entry decisions for these youths.

The large declines in light-manufacturing employment in New York City between 1970 and 1980, coupled with various forms of discrimination in employment and earnings, meant that Puerto Rican workers confronted a sizeable disadvantage in the labor market. In the 1990s, high rates of joblessness and unemployment continue to be a shared experience among Puerto Rican men and women and their working-age children. This can only have devastating effects on young people, who come to believe that persistent poverty and the attendant ills are inevitable.

### Endnotes

1. Youths, siblings, other relatives or the householder who reported being in the labor force (either employed or unemployed) were considered to be active labor-market participants. All others were categorized as being non-participants. Labor-force participants may be referred to as "employed" or "working" in the paper. Non-civilian respondents were excluded.
2. If there are two older sisters who meet the age criterion and one sister is in the labor force and the other is not, both the category "older sister employed" and the category "older sister not employed" will take the value of number 1. With four possible sibling records being included in the analysis, observations for one or more of the siblings within the same age group will appear in the regressions and some of the independent variables may be identical. See Rees and Gray (1982: 462-463).
3. The alternative tobit estimation results using annual hours worked as the dependent variable is available from the author upon request.

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**APPENDIX A**  
*Variable Definitions*

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YWorks = 1 if young respondent reported being in the labor force (employed or unemployed during the survey week); 0 otherwise

YAnnHrs = the number of annual hours worked by the young person during 1979 (annual weeks worked in 1979 x hours worked per week in 1979)

LnExogIn = natural logarithm of household income excluding labor earnings of young respondent and any public assistance payments received by the household

Yeduc = number of years of education completed by young respondent

HHWorks = 1 if the head of household (parent) was in the labor force (employed or unemployed) during the survey week; 0 otherwise

MSEmp = 1 if the head of household was male and self-employed; 0 otherwise

FHHead = 1 if the household in which the young respondent resided was female-headed; 0 otherwise

Poor = 1 if the income of the household was determined by the Census Bureau to be below the cutoff for poverty level income; 0 otherwise

Ydisable = 1 if the young respondent reported having a work or transportation disability; 0 otherwise

Ybirth = 1 if the young respondent was born in the United States; 0 otherwise

UnEmpRt = the civilian unemployment rate for each racial/ethnic group by county location in New York City

Yenglish = 1 if respondent reported poor English proficiency; 0 otherwise

UWColl = 1 if household head (parent) worked in upper white-collar occupations, i.e. professionals, technical, and managerial personnel; 0 otherwise

LWColl = 1 if household head (parent) worked in lower white-collar occupations, i.e., clerical and sales; 0 otherwise

UBColl = 1 if household head (parent) worked in upper blue-collar or craft job; 0 otherwise

LBColl = 1 if household head (parent) worked in lower blue-collar job, i.e. operative and laborer; 0 otherwise



## APPENDIX A

*Continued*

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ServOcc = 1 if household head (parent) worked in service job, including private household worker; 0 otherwise

YoBro = 1 if respondent had an inactive, younger brother living at home; 0 otherwise

OIBro = 1 if respondent had an inactive, older brother living at home; 0 otherwise

YoBroEmp = 1 if respondent had an active (employed or unemployed) younger brother living at home; 0 otherwise

OIBroEmp = 1 if respondent had an active (employed or unemployed) older brother living at home; 0 otherwise

YoSis = 1 if respondent had an inactive, younger sister living at home; 0 otherwise

OISis = 1 if respondent had an inactive, older sister living at home; 0 otherwise

YoSisEmp = 1 if respondent had an active (employed or unemployed) younger sister living at home; 0 otherwise

OISisEmp = 1 if respondent had an active (employed or unemployed) older sister living at home; 0 otherwise

Mrelative = 1 if respondent had an inactive male, relative living at home; 0 otherwise

Frelative = 1 if respondent had an inactive, female relative living at home; 0 otherwise

MRelEmp = 1 if respondent had an active (employed or unemployed) male, relative living at home; 0 otherwise

FRelEmp = 1 if respondent had an active (employed or unemployed) female, relative living at home; 0 otherwise

NoKids = \*1 if respondent reported no children; 0 otherwise

**APPENDIX B**  
*Selected Variable Means for Males, Ages 16-19 and 20-24*  
*(standard deviations)*

|          | <i>Puerto Rican</i> |                | <i>Black</i>   |                | <i>White</i>   |                |
|----------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|          | <i>16-19</i>        | <i>20-24</i>   | <i>16-19</i>   | <i>20-24</i>   | <i>16-19</i>   | <i>20-24</i>   |
| YWorks   | .435<br>(.496)      | .65<br>(.477)  | .534<br>(.499) | .703<br>(.457) | .685<br>(.465) | .859<br>(.348) |
| YAnnHrs  | 339<br>(630)        | 789<br>(850)   | 342<br>(610)   | 805<br>(851)   | 642<br>(759)   | 1260<br>(853)  |
| YEduc    | 9.55<br>(2.26)      | 10.6<br>(2.35) | 10.3<br>(1.84) | 11.5<br>(2.25) | 10.9<br>(1.73) | 12.6<br>(2.45) |
| HHWorks  | .465<br>(.499)      | .551<br>(.498) | .684<br>(.466) | .707<br>(.455) | .812<br>(.391) | .797<br>(.403) |
| FHHead   | .535<br>(.499)      | .421<br>(.494) | .538<br>(.499) | .537<br>(.499) | .211<br>(.408) | .187<br>(.39)  |
| Poor     | .478<br>(.5)        | .298<br>(.458) | .333<br>(.472) | .214<br>(.411) | .124<br>(.33)  | .041<br>(.197) |
| YDisable | .076<br>(.266)      | .098<br>(.297) | .062<br>(.241) | .08<br>(.271)  | .033<br>(.179) | .039<br>(.193) |
| UnEmprt  | 12.6<br>(1.57)      | 12.4<br>(1.65) | 12.1<br>(2.27) | 12.1<br>(2.34) | 11.2<br>(2.67) | 11.0<br>(2.69) |
| UWColl   | .071<br>(.257)      | .052<br>(.221) | .099<br>(.298) | .111<br>(.315) | .181<br>(.385) | .179<br>(.383) |
| LWColl   | .09<br>(.286)       | .11<br>(.313)  | .173<br>(.378) | .202<br>(.401) | .201<br>(.401) | .248<br>(.432) |
| UBColl   | .073<br>(.261)      | .082<br>(.274) | .097<br>(.296) | .084<br>(.278) | .149<br>(.357) | .156<br>(.363) |
| LBColl   | .139<br>(.346)      | .165<br>(.372) | .134<br>(.34)  | .100<br>(.301) | .163<br>(.37)  | .128<br>(.335) |
| ServOcc  | .166<br>(.372)      | .211<br>(.409) | .269<br>(.444) | .293<br>(.455) | .177<br>(.382) | .179<br>(.383) |
| YoBroEmp | .033<br>(.178)      | .06<br>(.238)  | .027<br>(.161) | .043<br>(.204) | .041<br>(.198) | .069<br>(.254) |
| OlBroEmp | .022<br>(.146)      | .103<br>(.304) | .025<br>(.155) | .103<br>(.304) | .032<br>(.175) | .141<br>(.348) |
| YoSisEmp | .025<br>(.155)      | .064<br>(.245) | .041<br>(.199) | .038<br>(.191) | .068<br>(.252) | .08<br>(.272)  |
| OlSisEmp | .076<br>(.266)      | .107<br>(.309) | .086<br>(.281) | .118<br>(.323) | .155<br>(.363) | .15<br>(.357)  |
| MRelEmp  | .016<br>(.127)      | .011<br>(.103) | .006<br>(.078) | .012<br>(.108) | .005<br>(.067) | .001<br>(.037) |
| FRelEmp  | .003<br>(.052)      | .014<br>(.119) | .008<br>(.09)  | .021<br>(.143) | .002<br>(.039) | .002<br>(.047) |
| n=       | 368                 | 563            | 487            | 1106           | 663            | 2244           |

\* All youths live with their parent(s) and are not enrolled in school.  
 Source: 1980 5% PUMS for New York City

**APPENDIX C**  
*Selected Variable Means for Females, Ages 16-19 and 20-24*  
*(standard deviations )*

|          | <i>Puerto Rican</i> |                | <i>Black</i>   |                | <i>White</i>   |                |
|----------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|          | <i>16-19</i>        | <i>20-24</i>   | <i>16-19</i>   | <i>20-24</i>   | <i>16-19</i>   | <i>20-24</i>   |
| YWorks   | .287<br>(.453)      | .588<br>(.493) | .35<br>(.477)  | .57<br>(.495)  | .726<br>(.447) | .863<br>(.344) |
| YAnnHrs  | 219<br>(518)        | 711<br>(839)   | 232<br>(521)   | 648<br>(817)   | 773<br>(791)   | 1362<br>(786)  |
| LnExogIn | 8.36<br>(2.39)      | 8.79<br>(1.91) | 8.8<br>(1.95)  | 9.19<br>(1.64) | 9.65<br>(1.6)  | 9.88<br>(1.22) |
| YEduc    | 9.74<br>(2.26)      | 11.3<br>(2.47) | 10.7<br>(2.02) | 11.9<br>(2.39) | 11.4<br>(1.54) | 12.9<br>(2.23) |
| HHWorks  | .47<br>(.5)         | .521<br>(.5)   | .636<br>(.482) | .681<br>(.466) | .833<br>(.373) | .818<br>(.386) |
| FHHead   | .514<br>(.501)      | .472<br>(.5)   | .591<br>(.492) | .547<br>(.498) | .199<br>(.4)   | .175<br>(.38)  |
| Poor     | .507<br>(.501)      | .328<br>(.47)  | .375<br>(.485) | .249<br>(.432) | .09<br>(.286)  | .038<br>(.191) |
| YDisable | .068<br>(.251)      | .088<br>(.284) | .049<br>(.217) | .062<br>(.242) | .022<br>(.147) | .03<br>(.169)  |
| YBirth   | .696<br>(.461)      | .674<br>(.469) | .866<br>(.341) | .82<br>(.385)  | .917<br>(.276) | .928<br>(.259) |
| UnEmpRt  | 12.7<br>(1.51)      | 12.6<br>(1.45) | 12.3<br>(2.15) | 11.9<br>(2.4)  | 11<br>(2.69)   | 10.9<br>(2.7)  |
| UWCol    | .054<br>(.227)      | .056<br>(.230) | .086<br>(.281) | .108<br>(.311) | .195<br>(.396) | .197<br>(.398) |
| LWCol    | .088<br>(.284)      | .086<br>(.281) | .191<br>(.394) | .161<br>(.368) | .207<br>(.405) | .264<br>(.441) |
| UBColl   | .071<br>(.257)      | .074<br>(.263) | .045<br>(.208) | .066<br>(.249) | .18<br>(.384)  | .159<br>(.366) |
| LBColl   | .145<br>(.353)      | .163<br>(.37)  | .107<br>(.309) | .12<br>(.325)  | .127<br>(.333) | .124<br>(.329) |
| ServOcc  | .196<br>(.398)      | .195<br>(.397) | .292<br>(.455) | .316<br>(.465) | .184<br>(.388) | .158<br>(.365) |
| YoBroEmp | .051<br>(.22)       | .044<br>(.206) | .043<br>(.204) | .048<br>(.214) | .075<br>(.264) | .073<br>(.261) |
| OlBroEmp | .098<br>(.298)      | .128<br>(.334) | .105<br>(.307) | .145<br>(.352) | .207<br>(.405) | .193<br>(.395) |
| YoSisEmp | .007<br>(.082)      | .042<br>(.201) | .017<br>(.127) | .038<br>(.191) | .041<br>(.199) | .077<br>(.267) |
| OlSisEmp | .007<br>(.082)      | .086<br>(.281) | .008<br>(.090) | .083<br>(.275) | .033<br>(.177) | .113<br>(.316) |
| MRelEmp  | .044<br>(.205)      | .033<br>(.178) | .004<br>(.064) | .034<br>(.18)  | .009<br>(.094) | .011<br>(.103) |
| FRelEmp  | .003<br>(.058)      | .005<br>(.068) | .008<br>(.09)  | .009<br>(.095) | .001<br>(.038) | .004<br>(.06)  |
| NoKids   | .76<br>(.428)       | .756<br>(.43)  | .72<br>(.449)  | .624<br>(.485) | .974<br>(.161) | .969<br>(.174) |
| n=       | 296                 | 430            | 486            | 982            | 678            | 1969           |

\* All youths live with their parent(s) and are not enrolled in school  
 Source: 1980 5% PUMS for New York City

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